

BOOK OF
SCOTTISH STORY.

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To Andrew Barr
from
Aunt Jessie

THE BOOK
OF
SCOTTISH STORY:

*HISTORICAL, HUMOROUS, LEGENDARY,
AND IMAGINATIVE.*

SELECTED FROM THE
Works of Standard Scottish Authors.

*"Stories to read are delitable,
Suppose that they be nougat but fable;
Then should stories that soothfast were,
And they were said on gude manner,
Have double pleasance in hearing."*

BARBOUR.

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P R E F A C E.

NEXT to its Ballads and Songs, the Stories of Scottish Literature are the most characteristic exponents of the national spirit. Allowing for the changes which time and the progress of civilization have effected in the national manners and character since the beginning of the present century—the era to which the Stories chiefly refer—they shall be found to delineate the social and domestic features of Scottish life as faithfully as the Ballads do the spirit and sentiment of an earlier age; or as the daily press reflects, rather than portrays, those of the present day. While Songs—the simple expressions of feelings and sentiments, musically rendered—change, in so far as they exhibit habits and manners, yet their form is lasting. Not so the Ballads, whose true historical successors are Prose Stories, as Novels are those of Romances.

Whether we account for it on the theory that a larger infusion of the imaginative and romantic elements, characteristic of the Celtic race, gives additional fervour to the Scottish character, or otherwise, it is a fact that in no other community, on the same social level as that of the peasantry and working-classes of Scotland, has this form of literature had so enthusiastic a reception. There can be no doubt

that this widely diffused and keen appreciation, by an earnest and self-respecting people, of Stories which are largely graphic delineations of their own national features, has been the chief stimulus to the production of so large and excellent a supply as our literature contains.

The present Selection is made on the principle of giving the best specimens of the most popular authors, with as great a variety, as to subjects, as is compatible with these conditions.

The favourable reception of the issue in the serial form, both by the press and the public, is looked upon by the projectors as an earnest—now that the book is completed—that its further reception will be such as to assure them that they have not fallen short of the aim announced in their prospectus, viz., to form a Collection of Standard Scottish Tales calculated to delight the imagination, to convey interesting information, and to elevate and strengthen the moral principles of the young.

EDINBURGH, *August 1876.*

C O N T E N T S.

	PAGE
The Henpecked Man,	<i>John Mackay Wilson,</i> I
Duncan Campbell,	<i>James Hogg,</i> IO
The Lily of Liddisdale,	<i>Professor Wilson,</i> 23
The Unlucky Present,	<i>Robert Chambers,</i> 35
The Tutor of Selkirk : a Remarkably True Story, “ <i>The Odd Volume,</i> ”	37
Elsie Morrice,	<i>Aberdeen Censor,</i> 41
How I won the Laird’s Daughter,	<i>Daniel Gorrie,</i> 46
Moss-Side,	<i>Professor Wilson,</i> 56
My First Fee,	<i>Edin. Literary Journal,</i> 61
The Kirk of Tullibody,	<i>Chambers’s Edin. Journal,</i> 64
The Progress of Inconstancy,	<i>Blackwood’s Magazine,</i> 65
Adam Bell,	<i>James Hogg,</i> 73
Mauns’ Stane ; or, Mine Host’s Tale,	<i>Aberdeen Censor,</i> 76
The Freebooter of Lochaber,	<i>Sir Thomas Dick Lauder,</i> 79
An Hour in the Manse,	<i>Professor Wilson,</i> 82
The Warden of the Marches,	<i>Edin. Literary Gazette,</i> 88
The Alehouse Party,	“ <i>The Odd Volume,</i> ” 96
Auchindrane ; or, the Ayrshire Tragedy,	<i>Sir Walter Scott,</i> 99
A Tale of the Plague in Edinburgh,	<i>Robert Chambers,</i> 104
The Probationer’s First Sermon,	<i>Daniel Gorrie,</i> 110
The Crimes of Richard Hawkins,	<i>Thomas Aird,</i> 115
The Headstone,	<i>Professor Wilson,</i> 120
The Widow’s Prediction,	<i>Edin. Literary Journal,</i> 123
The Lady of Waristoun,	<i>Chambers’s Edin. Journal,</i> 127
A Tale of Pentland,	<i>James Hogg,</i> 129
Graysteel : a Traditionary Story of Caithness,	<i>John o’ Groat Journal,</i> 136
The Bilketed Soldier,	<i>Eminent Men of Fife,</i> 139

	PAGE
Bruntsfield : a Tale of the Sixteenth Century,	<i>Chambers's Edin. Journal,</i> 141
Sunset and Sunrise,	<i>Professor Wilson,</i> 147
Miss Peggy Brodie,	<i>Andrew Picken,</i> 151
The Death of a Prejudice,	<i>Thomas Aird,</i> 156
Anent Auld Grandfaither, &c.,	<i>D. M. Moir,</i> 161
John Brown ; or, the House in the Muir,	<i>Blackwood's Magazine,</i> 168
Traditions of the Old Tolbooth of Edinburgh,	<i>Robert Chambers,</i> 174
The Lover's Last Visit,	<i>Professor Wilson,</i> 183
Mary Queen of Scots and Chatelar,	<i>Literary Souvenir,</i> 187
A Night in Duncan M'Gowan's,	<i>Blackwood's Magazine,</i> 193
The Miller and the Freebooter,	<i>Sir Thomas Dick Lauder,</i> 213
Benjie's Christening,	<i>D. M. Moir,</i> 214
The Minister's Widow,	<i>Professor Wilson,</i> 217
The Battle of the Breeks,	<i>Robert Macnish,</i> 223
My Sister Kate,	<i>Andrew Picken,</i> 228
Wat the Prophet,	<i>James Hogg,</i> 235
The Snow-Storm,	<i>Professor Wilson,</i> 241
Love at one Glimpse,	<i>Edin. Literary Journal,</i> 251
Nanny Welsh, the Minister's Maid,	<i>Daniel Gorrie,</i> 252
Lady Jean : a Tale of the Seventeenth Century,	<i>Chambers's Edin. Journal,</i> 257
The Monkey,	<i>Robert Macnish,</i> 271
The Ladder-Dancer,	<i>Blackwood's Magazine,</i> 276
The Elder's Death-Bed,	<i>Professor Wilson,</i> 280
A Highland Feud,	<i>Sir Walter Scott,</i> 286
The Resurrection Men,	<i>D. M. Moir,</i> 288
Mary Wilson,	<i>Aberdeen Censor,</i> 292
The Laird of Cassway,	<i>James Hogg,</i> 296
The Elder's Funeral,	<i>Professor Wilson,</i> 310
Macdonald, the Cattle-Riever,	<i>Literary Gazette,</i> 314
The Murder Hole,	<i>Blackwood's Magazine,</i> 316
The Miller of Doune : a Traveller's Tale,	“ <i>The Odd Volume,</i> ” 321
The Headless Cumins,	<i>Sir Thomas Dick Lauder,</i> 335
The Lady Isabel,	<i>Chambers's Edin. Journal,</i> 336
The Desperate Duel,	<i>D. M. Moir,</i> 339
The Vacant Chair,	<i>John Mackay Wilson,</i> 344
Colkittoch,	<i>Literary Gazette,</i> 352
The Covenanters,	<i>Robert Macnish,</i> 354
The Poor Scholar,	<i>Professor Wilson,</i> 366
The Crushed Bonnet,	<i>Glasgow Athenæum,</i> 371

	PAGE
The Villagers of Auchincraig,	374
Perling Joan,	379
Janet Smith,	382
The Unlucky Top Boots,	385
My First and Last Play,	394
Jane Malcolm : a Village Tale,	399
Bowed Joseph,	402
The Laird of Wineholm,	405
An Incident in the Great Moray Floods of 1829,	416
Charlie Graham, the Tinker,	419
The Snowing-up of Strath Lugas,	423
Ezra Peden,	432
Young Ronald of Morar,	447
The Broken Ring,	449
A Passage of My Life,	452
The Court Cave : a Legendary Tale of Fife,	458
Helen Waters : a Tale of the Orkneys,	473
Legend of the Large Mouth,	476
Richard Sinclair ; or, the Poor Prodigal,	482
The Barley Fever—and Rebuke,	491
Elphin Irving, the Fairies' Cupbearer,	496
Choosing a Minister,	505
The Meal Mob,	508
The Flitting,	510
Ewen of the Little Head,	512
Basil Rolland,	513
The Last of the Jacobites,	534
The Grave-Digger's Tale,	537
The Fairy Bride : a Traditional Tale,	542
The Lost Little Ones,	546
An Orkney Wedding,	558
The Ghost with the Golden Casket,	564
Ranald of the Hens,	573
The French Spy,	575
The Minister's Beat,	577
A Scottish Gentlewoman of the Last Century,	589
The Faithless Nurse,	592
Traditions of the Celebrated Major Weir,	600
The Windy Yule,	603

	PAGE
Grizel Cochrane,	<i>Chambers's Edin. Journal</i> , 605
The Fatal Prayer,	<i>Literary Melange</i> , 613
Glenmannow, the Strong Herdsman,	<i>William Bennet</i> , 616
My Grandmother's Portrait,	<i>Daniel Gorrie</i> , 623
The Baptism,	<i>Professor Wilson</i> , 628
The Laird's Wooing,	<i>John Galt</i> , 632
Thomas the Rhymer: an Ancient Fairy Legend,	<i>Sir Walter Scott</i> , 634
Lachlan More,	<i>Literary Gazette</i> , 638
Alemoor : a Tale of the Fifteenth Century,	<i>Chambers's Edin. Journal</i> , 641
Tibby Fowler,	<i>John Mackay Wilson</i> , 651
Daniel Cathie, Tobacconist,	<i>Edin. Literary Almanac</i> , 655
The Haunted Ships,	<i>Allan Cunningham</i> , 662
A Tale of the Martyrs,	<i>James Hogg</i> , 672
The Town Drummer,	<i>John Galt</i> , 676
The Awful Night,	<i>D. M. Moir</i> , 678
Rose Jamieson,	<i>Anon.</i> , 685
A Night at the Herring Fishing,	<i>Hugh Miller</i> , 690
The Twin Sisters,	<i>Alexander Balfour</i> , 694
Albert Bane: an Incident of the Battle of Culloden,	<i>Henry Mackenzie</i> , 702
The Penny Wedding,	<i>Alexander Campbell</i> , 705
Peat-Casting Time,	<i>Thomas Gillespie</i> , 721
An Adventure with the Press-Gang,	<i>Paisley Magazine</i> , 727
The Laird of Cool's Ghost,	<i>Old Chap Book</i> , 731
Allan-a-Sop,	<i>Sir Walter Scott</i> , 738
John Hetherington's Dream,	<i>Old Chap Book</i> , 741
Black Joe o' the Bow,	<i>James Smith</i> , 743
The Fight for the Standard,	<i>James Paterson</i> , 752
Catching a Tartar,	<i>D. M. Moir</i> , 755

THE BOOK OF SCOTTISH STORY.

THE HENPECKED MAN.

BY JOHN MACKAY WILSON.

EVERY one has heard the phrase, “Go to Birgham!” which signifies much the same as bidding you go to a worse place. The phrase is familiar not only on the borders, but throughout all Scotland, and has been in use for more than five hundred years, having taken its rise from Birgham being the place where the Scottish nobility were when they dastardly betrayed their country into the hands of the first Edward; and the people, despising the conduct and the cowardice of the nobles, have rendered the saying, “Go to Birgham!” an expression of contempt until this day. Many, however, may have heard the saying, and even used it, who know not that Birgham is a small village, beautifully situated on the north side of the Tweed, about midway between Coldstream and Kelso; though, if I should say that the village itself is beautiful, I should be speaking on the wrong side of the truth. Yet there may be many who have both heard the saying and seen the place, who never heard of little Patie Crichton, the bicker-maker. Patie was of diminutive stature, and he followed the profession (if the members of the *learned* professions be not offended at my using the term) of a cooper, or bicker-maker, in Birg-

ham for many years. His neighbours used to say of him, “The puir body’s henpecked.”

Patie was in the habit of attending the neighbouring fairs with the watercogs, cream-bowies, bickers, piggins, and other articles of his manufacture. It was Dunse fair, and Patie said he “had done extraordinar’ weel—the sale had been far beyond what he expeckit.” His success might be attributed to the circumstance that, when out of the sight and hearing of his better half, for every bicker he sold he gave his customers half-a-dozen jokes into the bargain. Every one, therefore, liked to deal with little Patie. The fair being over, he retired with a crony to a public-house in the Castle Wynd, to crack of old stories over a glass, and inquire into each other’s welfare. It was seldom they met, and it was as seldom that Patie dared to indulge in a single glass; but, on the day in question, he thought they could manage another gill, and another was brought. Whether the sight of it reminded him of his domestic miseries, and of what awaited him at home, I cannot tell; but after drinking another glass, and pronouncing the spirits excellent, he thus addressed his friend :—

"Ay, Robin" (his friend's name was Robin Roughead), "ye're a happy man—ye're maister in your ain hoose, and ye've a wife that adores and *obeys* ye ; but I'm nae better than naebody at my ain fireside. I'll declare I'm waur : wife an' bairns laugh at me—I'm treated like an outlan' body an' a fule. Though without me they might gang an' beg, there is nae mair respeck paid to me than if I were a pair o' auld bauchels flung into a corner. Fifteen years syne I couldna believed it o' Tibby, though onybody had sworn it to me. I firmly believe that a gude wife is the greatest blessin' that can be conferred upon a man on this earth. I can imagine it by the treasure that my faither had in my mither ; for, though the best may hae *words* between them occasionally, and I'm no saying that they hadna, yet they were just like passin' showers, to mak the kisses o' the sun upon the earth mair sweet after them. Her whole study was to please him and to mak him comfortable. She was never happy but when he was happy ; an' he was just the same wi' her. I've heard him say that she was worth untold gold. But, O Robin ! if I think that a guid wife is the greatest blessin' a man can enjoy, weel do I ken that a scoldin', domineerin' wife is his greatest curse. It's a terrible thing to be snooled in your ain house—naebody can form an idea o't but they wha experience it.

"Ye remember when I first got acquainted wi' Tibby, she was doing the bondage work at Riselaw. I first saw her coming out o' Eccles kirk ae day, and I really thocht that I had never seen a better-fauored or a more gallant-looking lass. Her cheeks were red and white like a half-ripe strawberry, or rather, I should say, like a cherry ; and she seemed as modest and meek as a lamb. It wasna very lang until I drew up ; and though she didna gie me ony great encouragement at first, yet, in a week or twa, after the ice was fairly

broken, she became remarkably ceevil, and gied me her oxter on a Sunday. We used to saunier about the loanings, no saying meikle, but unco happy ; and I was aye restless whan I was out o' her sight. Ye may guess that the shoemaker was nae loser by it during the six months that I ran four times a-week, wet or dry, between Birgham and Riselaw. But the term-time was drawing nigh, and I put the important question, and pressed her to name the day. She hung her head, and she seemed no to ken weel what to say ; for she was sae mim and sae gentle then, that ye wad hae said 'butter wadna melt in her mouth.' And when I pressed her mair urgently—

" 'I'll just leave it to yoursel, Peter,' says she.

"I thocht my heart wad loup'd out at my mouth. I believe there never was a man sae beside himsel wi' joy in this warld afore. I fairly danced again, and cut as many antics as a merryandrew. 'O Tibby,' says I,

'I'm ower happy now !—Oh, haud my head ! This gift o' joy is like to be my dead.'

" 'I hope no, Peter,' said she ; 'I wad rather hae ye to live than dee for me.'

"I thocht she was as sensible as she was bonny, and better natured than baith.

"Weel, I got the house set up, the wedding-day cam, and everything passed ower as agreeably as onybody could desire. I thocht Tibby turning bonnier and bonnier. For the first five or six days after the weddin', everything was 'hinny,' and 'mylove,' and 'Tibby, dear,' or 'Peter, dear.' But matters didna stand lang at this. It was on a Saturday nicht, I mind, just afore I was gaun to drap work, that three or four acquaintances cam into the shop to wush me joy, and they insisted I should pay off for the weddin'. Ye ken I never was behint hand ; and I agreed that I

wad just fling on my coat and step up wi' them to Orange Lane. So I gaed into the house and took down my market coat, which was hangin' behint the bed ; and after that I gaed to the kist to tak out a shilling or twa ; for, up to that time, Tibby had not usurped the office of Chancellor o' the Exchequer. I did it as cannily as I could ; but she had suspected something, and heard the jinkin' o' the siller.

"What are ye doing, Patie?" says she ; "whar are ye gaun?"

"I had never heard her voice hae sic a sound afore, save the first time I drew up to her, when it was rather sharp than agreeable.

"Ou, my dear," says I, "I'm just gaun up to Orange Lane a wee while."

"To Orange Lane!" says she ; "what in the name of fortune's gaun to tak ye there?"

"O hinny, says I, "it's just a neebor lad or twa that's drapped in to wush us joy, and, ye ken, we canna but be neebor-like."

"Ay! the sorrow joy them!" says she, "and neebor too!—an' how meikle will that cost ye?"

"Hoot, Tibby," says I, for I was quite astonished at her, "ye dinna understand things, woman."

"No understand them!" says she ; "I wish to gudeness that ye wad understand them though! If that's the way ye intend to mak the siller flee, it's time there were somebody to tak care o't."

"I had put the siller in my pocket, and was gaun to the door mair surprised than I can weel express, when she cried to me—

"Mind what ye spend, and see that ye dinna stop."

"Ye need be under nae apprehensions o' that, hinny," said I, wishing to pacify her.

"See that it be sae," cried she, as I shut the door.

"I joined my neebors in a state of

greater uneasiness o' mind than I had experienced for a length o' time. I couldna help thinkin' but that Tibby had rather early begun to tak the upper hand, and it was what I never expected from her. However, as I was saying, we went up to Orange Lane, and we sat doun, and ae gill brocht on anither. Tibby's health and mine were drunk ; we had several capital sangs ; and, I daresay, it was weel on for ten o'clock afore we rose to gang awa. I was nae mair affected wi' drink than I am at this moment. But, somehow or ither, I was uneasy at the idea o' facing Tibby. I thought it would be a terrible thing to quarrel wi' her. I opened the door, and, bolting it after me, slipped in, half on the edge o' my fit. She was sitting wi' her hand at her haifit by the side o' the fire, but she never let on that she either saw or heard me—she dinna speak a single word. If ever there was a woman—

Nursing her wrath to keep it warm, it was her that nicht. I drew in a chair, and, though I was half-feared to speak—

"What's the matter, my pet?" says I—"what's happened ye?"

"But she sat looking into the fire, and never let on she heard me. 'E'en's ye like, Meg Dorts,' thought I, as Allan Ramsay says ; but I durstna say it, for I saw that there was a storm brewing. At last, I ventured to say again—

"What ails ye, Tibby, dear?—are ye no weel?"

"Weel!" cried she—"wha can be weel? Is this the way ye mean to carry on? What a time o' nicht is this to keep a body to, waiting and fretting on o' ye, their lane? Do you no think shame o' yoursel?"

"Hoot, woman," says I, "I'm surprised at ye ; I'm sure ye hae naething to mak a wark about—it's no late yet."

" 'I dinna ken what ye ca' late,' said she ; 'it wadna be late amang yer cronies, nae doubt ; but if it's no late, it's early, for I warrant it's mornin'.'

" 'Nonsense !' says I.

" 'Dinna tell me it's nonsense,' said she, 'for I'll be spoken to in nae sic way—I'll let you ken that. But how meikle has it cost ye ? Ye wad be treating them, nae doubt—and how meikle hae ye spent, if it be a fair question ?'

" 'Toots, Tibby !' said I, 'whar's the cause for a' this ? What great deal could it cost me ?'

" 'But hair by hair maks the carle's head bare,' added she—'mind ye that ; and mind ye that ye've a house to keep aboon your head noo. But, if ye canna do it, I maun do it for ye—sae gie me the key o' that kist—gie me it instantly ; and I'll tak care how ye gang drinkin' wi' ony body, and treatin' them till mornin' again.'

" For the sake o' peace I gied her the key ; for she was speakin' sae loud that I thocht a' the neebors wad hear—and she had nae suner got it, than awa she gaed to the kist and counted every shilling. I had nae great abundance then mair than I've now ; and—

" 'Is that a' ye hae ?' said she ; 'an' yet ye'll think o' gaun drinkin' and treatin' folk frae Saturday nicht till Sabbath mornin' ! If this is the life ye intend to lead, I wush to gudeness I had ne'er had onything to say to ye.'

" 'And if this is the life ye intend to lead me,' thought I, 'I wush the same thing.'

" But that was but the beginnin' o' my slavery. From that hour to this she has continued on from bad to worse. No man livin' can form an idea o' what I've suffered but mysel. In a mornin', or rather, I may say, in a forenoon, for it was aye nine or ten o'clock afore she got up, she sat doun to her tea and white scones and butter, while I had to be content wi' a scrimpit bicker o' brose

and sour milk for kitchen. Nor was this the warst o't ; for, when I cam in frae my wark for my breakfast, mornin' after mornin', the fire was black out ; and there had I, before I could get a bite to put in my mouth, to bend doun upon my knees and blaw it, and blaw it, till I was half-blind wi' ashes—for we hadna a pair o' bellowses ; and there wad she liegrumblin' a' the time, ca'in' me useless *this*, and useless *that* ; and I just had to put up wi' it. But after our first bairn was born, she grew far worse, and I becam mair and mair miserable every day. If I had been sleeping through the nicht, and the bairn had begun a kickin', or whingin'—then she was at the scoldin', and I was sure to be started out o' my sleep wi' a great drive atween the shouthers, and her cryin'—

" 'Get up, ye lazy body, ye—get up, and see what's the maiter wi' this bairn.'

" An' this was the trade half-a-dizen o' times in a nicht.

" At last, there was ae day, when a' that I had dune was simply saying a word about the denner no bein' ready, and afore ever I kenned whar I was, a cracky-stool that she had bought for the bairn cam fleein' across the room, and gied me a dirl on the elbow, that made me think my arm was broken. Ye may guess what a stroke it was, when I tell ye I couldna lift my hand to my head for a week to come. Noo, the like o' that, ye ken, was what mortal man couldna stand.

" 'Tibby,' said I, and I looked very desperate and determined, 'what do ye mean by this conduct ? By a' that's gracious, I'll no put up wi' it ony langer !'

" 'Ye'll no put up wi' it, *ye cratur !*' said she ; 'if ye gie me ony mair o' yer provocation, I'll pu' yer lugs for ye—wull ye put up wi' that ?'

" It was terrible for a man to hear his ain wife ca' him *a cratur !*—just as

if I had been a monkey or a laud-doug !

" 'O ye disdainfu' limmer,' thought I ; 'but if I could humble your proud spirit, I wad do it !' Weel, there was a grand new ballant hawkin' about the country at the time—it was ca'd 'Watty and Meg'—ye have nae doubt seen't. Meg was just such a terrible termagant as my Tibby ; and I remembered the perfect reformation that was wrought upon her by Watty's bidding her fare-weel, and threatenin' to list. So it just struck me that I wad tak a leaf out o' the ballant. Therefore, keeping the same serious and determined look, for I was in no humour to seem otherwise—'Tibby,' says I, 'there shall be nae mair o' this. But I will gang and list this very day, and ye'll see what will come ower ye then—ye'll maybe repent o' yer conduct whan it's ower late.'

" 'List ! ye totum ye !' said she ; 'do ye say *list* ?' and she said this in a tone and wi' a look o' derision that gaed through my very soul. ' What squad will ye list into ?—what regiment will tak ye ? Do ye intend to list for a fifer laddie ?' And as she said this, she held up her oxter, as if to tak me below't.

" I thought I wad hae drapped doun wi' indignation. I could hae stricken her, if I durst. Ye observe, I am just five feet twa inches and an eighth, upon my stockin'-soles. That is rather below the army standard—and I maun say it's a very foolish standard ; for a man o' my height stands a better chance to shoot anither than a giant that wad fire ower his head. But she was aware that I was below the mark, and my threat was of no avail ; so I had just to slink awa into the shop, rubbin' my elbow.

" But the cracky-stool was but the beginning o' her drivin' ; there wasna a week after that but she let flee at me whatever cam in the way, whenever I by accident crossed her cankered humour. It's a wonder that I'm in the land

o' the living ; for I've had the skin peeled off my legs—my arms maistly broken—my head cut, and ither parts o' my body a' black and blue, times out o' number. I thought her an angel when I was courtin' her; but, O Robin ! she has turned out—I'll no say what—an adder !—a teeger !—a she fury !

" As for askin' onybody into the house, it's a thing I durstna do for the life that's in my body. I never did it but ance, and that was when an auld schulefellow, that had been several years in America, ca'd at the shop to see me. After we had cracked a while—

" 'But I maun see the wife, Patie,' says he.

" Whether he had heard aboot her behaviour or no, I canna tell ; but, I assure ye, his request was onything but agreeable to me. However, I took him into the house, and I introduced him wi' fear and tremblin'.

" 'Tibby, dear,' said I—and I dinna think I had ca'd her *dear* for ten years afore—'here's Mr W——, an auld schulefellow o' mine, that's come a' the way frae America, an' ca'd in to see ye.'

" 'Ye're aye meetin' wi' auld schulefellows, or some set or ither, to tak ye aff yer wark,' muttered she, sulkily, but loud enough for him to hear.

" I was completely at a loss what to do or say next ; but, pretending as though I hadna heard her, I said, as familiarly and kindly as I could, though my heart was in a terrible swither—' Bring out the bottle, lass.'

" 'Bottle !' quo' she, ' what bottle ?—what does the man mean ?—has he paerted wi' the little sense that he ever had ?' But had ye seen her as she said this !—I've seen a cloud black when driven wi' a hurricane, and I've seen it awfu' when roarin' in the agony o' thunder ; hut never did I see onything that I was mair in fear o' than my wife's face at that moment. But, somehow or ither, I gathered courage to say

—‘Hoots, woman, what’s the use o’ behavin’ that way? I’m sure ye ken weel aneugh it’s the speerit bottle.’

“‘The speerit bottle!’ cried she, wi’ a scream; ‘and when was there a speerit bottle within this door? Dinna show yoursel off to your American freend for a greater man than ye are, Patie. I think, if wi’ a’ that ye bring in I get meat and bits o’ duds for your bairns, I do very weel.’

“This piece o’ impudence completely knocked me stupid, for, wad ye believe it, Robin? though she had lang driven a’ my freends frae about the house, yet, did ony o’ *her* freends ca’,—and that was maistly every Sunday, and every Coldstream market-day,—there was the bottle out frae the cupboard, which she aye kept under lock and key; and a dram, and a bit short-bread nae less, was aye and to this day handed round to every ane o’ them. They hae discovered that it’s worth while to make Patie the bicker-maker’s a half-way house. But if I happen to be in when they ca’, though she pours out a fu’ glass a-piece for them, she takes aye gude care to stand in afore me when she comes to me, between them and me, so that they canna see what she is doing, or how meikle she pours out; and, I assure ye, it is seldom a thimblefu’ that fa’s to my share, though she hauds the bottle lang up in her hand—mony a time, no a weetin’; and again and again have I shoyed my head past her side, and said, ‘Your health, Mrs So-and-so’—or, ‘Yours, Mr Such-a-thing,’ wi’ no as meikle in my glass as wad droun a midge. Or, if I was sae placed that she durstna but, for shame, fill a glass within half-an-inch o’ the tap or sae, she wad gae me a look, or a wink, or mak a motion o’ some kind, which weel did I ken the meanin’ o’, and which was the same as saying—‘Drink it if ye daur!’ O Robin, man! it’s weel for ye that kens no what it is to be a footba’ at your ain fireside. I daresay, my freend burned

at the bane for me; for he got up, and—

“I wish you good-day, Mr Crichton,’ said he; ‘I have business in Kelso to-night yet, and can’t stop.’

“I was perfectly overpowered wi’ shame; but it was a relief to me when he gaed awa—and I slipped out after him, and into the shop again.

“But Tibby’s isna the only persecution that I hae to put up wi’; for we hae five bairns, and she’s brought them a’ up to treat me as she does hersel. If I offer to correct them, they cry out—‘I’ll tell my mither!’—and frae the auldest to the youngest o’ them, when they speak aboot me, it is *he* did this, or *he* did that—they for ever talk o’ me as *him!*—*him!* I never get the name o’ *faither* frae aye o’ them—and it’s a’ *her* doings. Now, I just ask ye simply if ony *faither* would put up wi’ the like o’ that? But I maun put up wi’t. If I were offering to lay hands upon them for’t, I’m sure and persuaded she wad rise a’ Birgham about me—my life wadna be safe where she is—but, indeed, I needna say that, for it never is.

“But there is ae thing that grieves me beyond a’ that I hae mentioned to ye. Ye ken my mither, puir auld body, is a widow now. She is in the seventy-sixth year o’ her age, and very frail. She has naebody to look after her but me—naebody that has a natural right to do it; for I never had ony brothers, as ye ken; and, as for my twa sisters, I daresay they have just a sair aneugh fecht wi’ their ain families, and as they are at a distance, I dinna ken how they are situated wi’ their gudemen—though I maun say for them, they send her a stane o’ oatmeal, an ounce o’ tobacco, or a pickle tea and sugar, now and then, which is very likely as often as they hae it in their power; and that is a great deal mair than I’m *allowed* to do for her—me that has a right to protect and maintain her. A’ that she has to support her is fifteenpence a-week aff the parish

o' Mertoun. O Robin, man!—Robin, man!—my heart rugs within me, when I talk to you about this. A' that I hae endured is naething to it! To see my puir auld mither in a state o' starvation, and no to be allowed to gie her a saxpence! O Robin, man!—Robin, man!—is it no awfu'? When she was first left destitute, and a widow, I tried to break the matter to Tibby, and to reason wi' her.

“O Tibby, woman!” said I, “I’m very distressed. Here’s my faither laid in the grave, and I dinna see what’s to come o’ my mither, puir body—she is auld, and she is frail—she has naebody to look after or provide for her but me.”

“You!” cried Tibby—“you! I wush ye wad mind what ye are talkin’ about! Ye have as many dougs, I can tell ye, as ye hae banes to pike! Let your mither do as ither widows hae done afore her—let the parish look after her.”

“O Tibby, woman!” said I; “but if ye’ll only consider—the parish money is very sma’, and, puir body, it will mak her heart sair to receive a penny o’t; for she weel kens that my faither would rather hae dee’d in a ditch than been behauden to either a parish or an individual for a saxpence.”

“An’ meikle they hae made by their pride,” said Tibby. “I wush ye wud haud your tongue.”

“Ay, but Tibby,” says I, for I was nettled mair than I durst show it, “but she has been a gude mother to me, and ye ken yoursel that she’s no been an ill gude-mother to ye. She never stood in the way o’ you an’ me comin’ thegither, though I was payin’ six shillings a-week into the house.”

“And what am I obliged to her for that?” interrupted my Jezebel.

“I dinna ken, Tibby,” says I; “but it’s a hard thing for a son to see a mother in want, when he can assist her. Now, it isna meikle she takes—she never was used wi’ dainties; and, if I

may just tak her hame, little will serve her, and her meat will ne’er be missed.”

“Ye born idiot!” cried Tibby. “I aye thought ye a fule—but ye are warse than a fule! Bring your mither here! An auld, cross-grained, fault-finding wife, that I ne’er could hae patience to endure for ten minutes in my days! Bring her here, say ye! No! while I live in this house, I’ll let ye ken that I’ll be mistress.”

“Ay, and maister too, thought I. I found it was o’ nae use to argue wi’ her. There was nae possibility o’ gettin’ my mither into the house; and as to assisting her wi’ a shillin’ or twa at a time by chance, or paying her house rent, or sending her a load o’ coals, it was perfectly out o’ the question, and beyond my power. Frae the nicht that I went to Orange Lane to this moment, I hae never had a saxpence under my thumb that I could ca’ my ain. Indeed, I never hae money in my hands, unless it be on a day like this, when I hae to gang to a fair, or the like o’ that; and even then, before I start, her leddyship sees every bowie, bicker, and piggin, that gangs into the cart—she kens the price o’ them as weel as I do; and if I shouldna bring hame either money or goods according to her valuation, I actually believe she wad murder me. There is nae cheatin’ her. It is by mere chance that, having had a gude market, I’ve outreachéd her the day by a shillin’ or twa; and ane o’ them I’ll spend wi’ you, Robin, and the rest shall gang to my mither. O man! ye may bless your stars that ye dinna ken what it is to hae a termagant wife.”

“I am sorry for ye, Patie,” said Robin Roughead; “but really I think, in a great measure, ye hae yoursel to blame for it a’!”

“Me!” said Patie—“what do ye mean, Robin?”

“Why, Patie,” said Robin, “I ken it is said that every ane can rule a bad wife but he that has her—and I believe

it is true. I am quite convinced that naebody kens sae weel where the shoe pinches as they that hae it on ; though I am quite satisfied that, had my case been yours, I wad hae brought her to her senses long afore now, though I had

Dauded her lugs wi' Rab Roryson's bannet, or gien her a *hoopin'*, like your friend the cooper o' Coldingham."

"Save us, man!" said Patie, who loved a joke, even though at second-hand, and at his own expense ; "but ye see the cooper's case is not in point, though I am in the same line ; for, as I hae observed, I am only five feet twa inches and an eighth in height—my wife *is not the weaker vessel*—that I ken to my sorrow."

"Weel, Patie," said Robin, "I wadna hae ye to lift your hand—I was but jokin' upon that score, it wadna be manly ;—but there is ae thing that ye can do, and I am sure it wad hae an excellent effect."

"Dear sake! what is that?" cried Patie.

"For a' that has happened ye," said Robin, "ye hae just yoursel to blame, for giein' up the key and the siller to her management that nicht ye gaed to Orange Lane. That is the short and the lang o' a' your troubles, Patie."

"Do you think sae?" inquired the little bicker-maker.

"Yes, I think sae, Peter, and I say it," said Robin ; "and there is but ae remedy left."

"And what is that?" asked Patie, eagerly.

"Just this," said Robin—"stop the supplies."

"Stop the supplies!" returned Patie—"what do you mean, Robin? I canna say that I fully comprehend ye."

"I just mean this," added the other ; "be your ain banker—your ain cashier—be maister o' your ain siller—let her find that it is to you she is indebted for

every penny she has the power to spend ; and if ye dinna bring Tibby to reason and kindness within a month, my name's no Robin Roughead."

"Do ye think that wad do it?" said Patie.

"If that wadna, naething wad," answered Robin ; "but try it for a twelvemonth—begin this very nicht ; and if we baith live and be spared to this time next year, I'll meet ye again, and I'll be the death o' a mutchkin, but that ye tell me Tibby's a different woman—your bairns different—your hale house different—and your auld mither comfortable."

"O man, if it might be sae," said Patie ; "but this very nicht, the moment I get hame, I'll try it—and, if I succeed, I'll try ye wi' a bottle o' wine, and I believe I never drank aye in my life."

"Agreed," said Robin ; "but mind ye're no to do things by halves. Ye're no to be feared out o' your resolution because Tibby may fire and storm, and let drive the things in the house at ye—nor even though she should greet."

"I thoroughly understand ye," said Patie ; "my resolution's ta'en, and I'll stand by it."

"Gie's your hand on't," said Robin ; and Patie gave him his hand.

Now, the two friends parted, and it is unnecessary for me either to describe their parting, or the reception which Patie, on his arriving at Birgham, met with from his spouse.

Twelve months went round, Dunse fair came again, and after the fair was over, Patie Crichton once more went in quest of his old friend, Robin Roughead. He found him standing in the horse market, and—

"How's a' wi' ye, my freend?" says Patie.

"Oh, hearty, hearty," cries the other ; "but how's a' wi' ye?—how is yer family?"

"Come and get the bottle o' wine

that I've to gie ye," said Patie, "and I'll tell ye a' about it."

"I'll do that," said Robin, "for my business is dune."

So they went into the same house in the Castle Wynd where they had been twelve months before, and Patie called for a bottle of wine; but he found that the house had not the wine license, and was therefore content with a gill of whisky made into toddy.

"O, man," said he to Robin, "I wad pay ye half-a-dizen bottles o' wine wi' as great cheerfulness as I raise this glass to my lips. It was a grand advice that o' yours—*stop the supplies*."

"I am glad to hear it," said Robin; "I was sure it was the only thing that would do."

"Ye shall hear a' about it," said Patie. "After parting wi' ye, I trudged hame to Birgham, and when I got to my house—before I had the sneck o' the door weel out o' my hand—

"What's stopped ye to this time o' nicht, ye fitless, feckless cratur, ye?" cried Tibby—"whaur hae ye been? Gie an account o' yourself."

"An account o' myself!" says I; and I gied the door a drive ahint me, as if I wad driven it aff the hinges—"for what should I gie an account o' myself?—or wha should I gie it to? I suppose this house is my ain, and I can come in and gang out when I like!"

"Yours!" cried she; "is the body drunk?"

"No," says I, "I'm no drunk, but I wad hae you to be decent. Where is my supper?—it is time that I had it."

"Ye might hae come in in time to get, it then," said she; "folk canna keep suppers waitin' on you."

"But I'll gang whar I can get it," said I; and I offered to leave the house.

"I'll tak the life o' ye first," said she. "Gie me the siller. Ye had five cogs, a dozen o' bickers, twa dozen o' piggins, three bowies, four cream dishes,

and twa ladles, besides the wooden spoons that I packed up mysel. Gie me the siller—and, you puir profligate, let me see what ye hae spent."

"Gie you the siller!" says I; "na, na, I've dune that lang aneugh—I *hae stopped the supplies*, my woman."

"Stop your breath!" cried she; "gie me the siller, every farthin', or wo betide ye!"

"It was needless for her to say *every farthin'*; for, had I dune as I used to do, I kenned she wad search through every pocket o' my claes the moment she thocht me asleep—through every hole and corner o' them, to see if I had cheated her out o' a single penny—ay, and tak them up, and shake them, and shake them, after a' was dune. But I was determined to stand fast by your advice.

"Do as ye like," says I; "I'll bring ye to your senses—I've stopped the supplies."

"She saw that I wasna drunk, and my manner rather dumfounded her a little. The bairns—wha, as I have tauld you, she aye encouraged to mock me—began to giggle at me, and to mak game o' me, as usual. I banged out o' the house, and into the shop, and took down the belt o' the bit turning-lathe, and into the house I goes again wi' it in my hand.

"Wha maks a fule o' me now?"

"And they a' laughed thegither, and I up wi' the belt, and loundered them round the house and round the house, till ane screamed and another screamed, and even their mither got clouts in trying to run betwixt them and me; and it was wha to squeel loudest. Sae, after I had brocht them a' to ken what I was, I awa yont to my mither's, and gaed her five shillin's, puir body; and after stoppin' an hour wi' her, I gaed back to the house again. The bairns were a' abed, and some o' them were still sobbin', and Tibby was sittin' by the fire; but she didna venture to say a

word—I had completely astonished her—and as little said I.

"There wasna a word passed between us for three days; I was beginning to carry my head higher in the house; and on the fourth day I observed that she had nae tea to her breakfast. A day or twa after, the auldest lassie cam to me ae morning about ten o'clock, and says she—

"Faither, I want siller for tea and sugar."

"Gae back to them that sent ye," says I, "and tell them to fare as I do, and they'll save the tea and sugar."

"But it is of nae use dwellin' on the subject. I did stop the supplies most effectually. I very soon brocht Tibby to ken wha was her bread-winner. An' when I saw that my object was accomplished, I showed mair kindness and affection to her than ever I had dune. The bairns becam as obedient as lambs, and she soon cam to say—'Peter, should I do this thing?'—or, 'Peter, should I do that thing?' So,

when I had brocht her that far—'Tibby,' says I, 'we hae a but and a ben, and it's grievin' me to see my auld mither starvin', and left by hersel wi' naebody to look after her. I think I'll bring her hame the morn—she'll aye be o' use about the house—she'll can knit the bairns' stockin's, or darn them when they are out o' the heels.'

"Weel, Peter," said Tibby, "I'm sure it's as little as a son can do, and I'm perfectly agreeable."

"I banged up—I flung my arms round Tibby's neck—'Oh! bless ye, my dear!' says I; 'bless ye for that!—there's the key o' the kist and the siller—from this time henceforth do wi' it what ye like.'

"Tibby grat. My mother cam hame to my house the next day. Tibby did everything to mak her comfortable—a' the bairns ran at her biddin'—and, frae that day to this, there isna a happier man on this wide world than Patie Crichton, the bicker-maker o' Birgham."

DUNCAN CAMPBELL.

BY JAMES HOGG, THE "ETTRICK SHEPHERD."

DUNCAN CAMPBELL came from the Highlands, when six years of age, to live with an old maiden aunt in Edinburgh, and attend the school. His mother was dead; but his father had supplied her place by marrying his housekeeper. Duncan did not trouble himself about these matters, nor, indeed, about any other matters, save a black foal of his father's and a large sagacious collie, named Oscar, which belonged to one of the shepherds. There being no other boy save Duncan about the house, Oscar and he were constant companions; with his garter

tied round Oscar's neck, and a piece of deal tied to his big bushy tail, Duncan would often lead him about the green, pleased with the idea that he was conducting a horse and cart. Oscar submitted to all this with great cheerfulness, but whenever Duncan mounted to ride on him, he found means instantly to unhorse him, either by galloping, or rolling himself on the green. When Duncan threatened him, he looked submissive and licked his face and hands; when he corrected him with the whip, he cowered at his feet. Matters were soon made up. Oscar would lodge

nowhere during the night but at the door of the room where his young friend slept, and woe be to the man or woman who ventured to enter it at untimely hours.

When Duncan left his native home he thought not of his father, nor any of the servants. He was fond of the ride, and some supposed that he scarcely even thought of the black foal ; but when he saw Oscar standing looking him ruefully in the face, the tears immediately blinded both his eyes. He caught him round the neck, hugged and kissed him—“Good-bye, Oscar,” said he, blubbering ; “good-bye. God bless you, my dear Oscar.” Duncan mounted before a servant, and rode away—Oscar still followed at a distance, until he reached the top of the hill—he then sat down and howled ; Duncan cried till his little heart was like to burst.

“What ails you?” said the servant.

“I will never see my poor honest Oscar again,” said Duncan, “an’ my heart canna bide it.”

Duncan stayed a year in Edinburgh, but he did not make great progress in learning. He did not approve highly of attending the school, and his aunt was too indulgent to compel his attendance. She grew extremely ill one day—the maids kept constantly by her, and never regarded Duncan. He was an additional charge to them, and they never loved him, but used him harshly. It was now with great difficulty that he could obtain either meat or drink. In a few days after his aunt was taken ill she died. All was in confusion, and poor Duncan was like to perish with hunger. He could find no person in the house ; but hearing a noise in his aunt’s chamber, he went in, and beheld them dressing the corpse of his kind relation. It was enough. Duncan was horrified beyond what mortal breast was able to endure ; he hasted down the stair, and ran along the High Street

and South Bridge, as fast as his feet could carry him, crying incessantly all the way. He would not have entered that house again if the world had been offered to him as a reward. Some people stopped him, in order to ask what was the matter ; but he could only answer them by exclaiming, “O ! dear ! O ! dear !” and struggling till he got free, held on his course, careless whether he went, provided he got far enough from the horrid scene he had so lately witnessed. Some have supposed, and I believe Duncan has been heard to confess, that he then imagined he was running for the Highlands, but mistook the direction. However that was, he continued his course until he came to a place where two ways met, a little south of Grange Toll. Here he sat down, and his frenzied passion subsided into a soft melancholy ; he cried no more, but sobbed excessively, fixed his eyes on the ground, and made some strokes in the dust with his finger.

A sight just then appeared which somewhat cheered, or at least interested his heavy and forlorn heart—it was a large drove of Highland cattle. They were the only creatures like acquaintances that Duncan had seen for a twelvemonth, and a tender feeling of joy, mixed with regret, thrilled his heart at the sight of their white horns and broad dew-laps. As the van passed him, he thought their looks were particularly gruff and sullen ; he soon perceived the cause, they were all in the hands of Englishmen ;—poor exiles like himself—going far away to be killed and eaten, and would never see the Highland hills again ! When they were all gone by, Duncan looked after them and wept anew ; but his attention was suddenly called away to something that softly touched his feet ; he looked hastily about—it was a poor, hungry, lame dog, squatted on the ground, licking his feet, and manifesting the most extravagant joy. Gracious heaven !

it was his own beloved and faithful Oscar! starved, emaciated, and so crippled that he was scarcely able to walk. He was now doomed to be the slave of a Yorkshire peasant (who, it seems, had either bought or stolen him at Falkirk), the generosity and benevolence of whose feelings were as inferior to those of Oscar, as Oscar was inferior to him in strength and power. It is impossible to conceive a more tender meeting than this was ; but Duncan soon observed that hunger and misery were painted in his friend's looks, which again pierced his heart with feelings unfelt before.

"I have not a crumb to give you, my poor Oscar!" said he—"I have not a crumb to eat myself, but I am not so ill as you are." The peasant whistled aloud. Oscar well knew the sound, and, clinging to the boy's bosom, leaned his head upon his thigh, and looked in his face, as if saying, "O Duncan, protect me from yon ruffian." The whistle was repeated, accompanied by a loud and surly call. Oscar trembled, but, fearing to disobey, he limped away reluctantly after his unfeeling master, who, observing him to linger and look back, imagined he wanted to effect his escape, and came running back to meet him. Oscar cowered to the earth in the most submissive and imploring manner, but the peasant laid hold of him by the ear, and, uttering many imprecations, struck him with a thick staff till he lay senseless at his feet.

Every possible circumstance seemed combined to wound the feelings of poor Duncan, but this unmerited barbarity shocked him most of all. He hastened to the scene of action, weeping bitterly, and telling the man that he was a cruel brute, and that if ever he himself grew a big man he would certainly kill him. He held up his favourite's head that he might recover his breath, and the man, knowing that he could do little without his dog, waited patiently to see what would be the issue. The animal re-

covered, and staggered away at the heels of his tyrant without daring to look behind. Duncan stood still, but kept his eyes eagerly fixed upon Oscar ; and the farther he went from him, the more strong his desire grew to follow him. He looked the other way, but all there was to him a blank,—he had no desire to stand where he was, so he followed Oscar and the drove of cattle.

The cattle were weary and went slowly, and Duncan, getting a little goad in his hand, assisted the men greatly in driving them. One of the drivers gave him a penny, and another gave him twopence ; and the lad who had charge of the drove, observing how active and pliable he was, and how far he had accompanied him on the way, gave him sixpence. This was a treasure to Duncan, who, being extremely hungry, bought three penny rolls as he passed through a town ; one of these he ate himself, another he gave to Oscar ; and the third he carried below his arm in case of further necessity. He drove on all the day, and at night the cattle rested upon a height, which, by his description, seems to have been that between Gala Water and Middleton. Duncan went off at a side, in company with Oscar, to eat his roll, and, taking shelter behind an old earthen wall, they shared their dry meal most lovingly between them. Ere it was quite finished, Duncan, being fatigued, dropped into a profound slumber, out of which he did not awake until the next morning was far advanced. Englishmen, cattle, and Oscar, all were gone. Duncan found himself alone on a wild height, in what country or kingdom he knew not. He sat for some time in a callous stupor, rubbing his eyes and scratching his head, but quite irresolute what was farther necessary for him to do, until he was agreeably surprised by the arrival of Oscar, who (although he had gone at his master's call in the morning) had found means to escape and seek the re-

treat of his young friend and benefactor. Duncan, without reflecting on the consequences, rejoiced in the event, and thought of nothing else but furthering his escape from the ruthless tyrant who now claimed him. For this purpose he thought it would be best to leave the road, and accordingly he crossed it, in order to go over a waste moor to the westward. He had not got forty paces from the road, until he beheld the enraged Englishman running towards him without his coat, and having his staff heaved over his shoulder. Duncan's heart fainted within him, knowing it was all over with Oscar, and most likely with himself. The peasant seemed not to have observed them, as he was running and rather looking the other way ; and as Duncan quickly lost sight of him in a hollow place that lay between them, he crept into a bush of heath, and took Oscar in his bosom. The heath was so long that it almost closed above them. The man had observed from whence the dog started in the morning, and hasted to the place, expecting to find him sleeping beyond the old earthen dyke ; he found the nest, but the birds were flown ;—he called aloud ; Oscar trembled and clung to Duncan's breast ; Duncan peeped from his purple covert, like a heath-cock on his native waste, and again beheld the ruffian coming straight towards them, with his staff still heaved, and fury in his looks. When he came within a few yards he stood still, and bellowed out : "Oscar, yho, yho !" Oscar quaked, and kept still closer to Duncan's breast ; Duncan almost sank in the earth. "D——n him," said the Englishman, "if I had hold of him I should make both him and the little thievish rascal dear at a small price ; they cannot be far gone,—I think I hear them." He then stood listening, but at that instant a farmer came up on horseback, and having heard him call, asked him if he had lost his dog ? The

peasant answered in the affirmative, and added, that a blackguard boy had stolen him. The farmer said that he met a boy with a dog about a mile forward. During this dialogue, the farmer's dog came up to Duncan's den,—smelled upon him, and then upon Oscar,—cocked his tail, walked round them growling, and then behaved in a very improper and uncivil manner to Duncan, who took all patiently, uncertain whether he was yet discovered. But so intent was the fellow upon the farmer's intelligence, that he took no notice of the discovery made by the dog, but ran off without looking over his shoulder.

Duncan felt this a deliverance so great that all his other distresses vanished ; and as soon as the man was out of his sight, he arose from his covert, and ran over the moor, and ere long, came to a shepherd's house, where he got some whey and bread for his breakfast, which he thought the best meat he had ever tasted, yet shared it with Oscar.

Though I had his history from his own mouth, yet there is a space here which it is impossible to relate with any degree of distinctness or interest. He was a vagabond boy, without any fixed habitation, and wandered about Heriot Moor, from one farmhouse to another, for the space of a year, staying from one to twenty nights in each house, according as he found the people kind to him. He seldom resented any indignity offered to himself ; but whoever insulted Oscar, or offered any observations on the impropriety of their friendship, lost Duncan's company the next morning.

He stayed several months at a place called Dewar, which he said was haunted by the ghost of a piper ; that piper had been murdered there many years before, in a manner somewhat mysterious, or at least unaccountable ; and there was scarcely a night on which he was not supposed either to be seen or heard

about the house. Duncan slept in the cow-house, and was terribly harassed by the piper; he often heard him scratching about the rafters, and sometimes he would groan like a man dying, or a cow that was choked in the band; but at length he saw him at his side one night, which so discomposed him, that he was obliged to leave the place, after being ill for many days. I shall give this story in Duncan's own words, which I have often heard him repeat without any variation.

"I had been driving some young cattle to the heights of Willenslee—it grew late before I got home—I was thinking, and thinking, how cruel it was to kill the poor piper! to cut out his tongue, and stab him in the back. I thought it was no wonder that his ghost took it extremely ill; when, all on a sudden, I perceived a light before me;—I thought the wand in my hand was all on fire, and threw it away, but I perceived the light glide slowly by my right foot, and burn behind me;—I was nothing afraid, and turned about to look at the light, and there I saw the piper, who was standing hard at my back, and when I turned round, he looked me in the face."

"What was he like, Duncan?" "He was like a dead body! but I got a short view of him; for that moment all around me grew dark as a pit!—I tried to run, but sank powerless to the earth, and lay in a kind of dream, I do not know how long. When I came to myself, I got up, and endeavoured to run, but fell to the ground every two steps. I was not a hundred yards from the house, and I am sure I fell upwards of a hundred times. Next day I was in a high fever; the servants made me a little bed in the kitchen, to which I was confined by illness many days, during which time I suffered the most dreadful agonies by night, always imagining the piper to be standing over me on the one side or the other. As soon as I was

able to walk, I left Dewar, and for a long time durst neither sleep alone during the night, nor stay by myself in the daytime."

The superstitious ideas impressed upon Duncan's mind by this unfortunate encounter with the ghost of the piper, seem never to have been eradicated—a strong instance of the power of early impressions, and a warning how much caution is necessary in modelling the conceptions of the young and tender mind, for, of all men I ever knew, he is the most afraid of meeting with apparitions. So deeply is his imagination tainted with this startling illusion, that even the calm disquisitions of reason have proved quite inadequate to the task of dispelling it. Whenever it wears late, he is always on the look-out for these ideal beings, keeping a jealous eye upon every bush and brake, in case they should be lurking behind them, ready to fly out and surprise him every moment; and the approach of a person in the dark, or any sudden noise, always deprives him of the power of speech for some time.

After leaving Dewar he again wandered about for a few weeks; and it appears that his youth, beauty, and peculiarly destitute situation, together with his friendship for his faithful Oscar, had interested the most part of the country people in his behalf; for he was generally treated with kindness. He knew his father's name, and the name of his house; but as none of the people he visited had ever before heard of either the one or the other, they gave themselves no trouble about the matter.

He stayed nearly two years in a place called Cowhaur, until a wretch, with whom he slept, struck and abused him one day. Duncan, in a rage, flew to the loft and cut all his Sunday hat, shoes, and coat in pieces; and, not daring to abide the consequences, decamped that night.

He wandered about for some time longer among the farmers of Tweed and Yarrow ; but this life was now become exceedingly disagreeable to him. He durst not sleep by himself, and the servants did not always choose to allow a vagrant boy and his great dog to sleep with them.

It was on a rainy night, at the close of harvest, that Duncan came to my father's house. I remember all the circumstances as well as the transactions of yesterday. The whole of his clothing consisted only of a black coat, which, having been made for a full-grown man, hung fairly to his heels ; the hair of his head was rough, curly, and weather-beaten ; but his face was ruddy and beautiful, bespeaking a healthy body and a sensible, feeling heart. Oscar was still nearly as large as himself, and the colour of a fox, having a white stripe down his face, with a ring of the same colour round his neck, and was the most beautiful collie I have ever seen. My heart was knit to Duncan at the first sight, and I wept for joy when I saw my parents so kind to him. My mother, in particular, could scarcely do anything else than converse with Duncan for several days. I was always of the party, and listened with wonder and admiration ; but often have these adventures been repeated to me. My parents, who soon seemed to feel the same concern for him as if he had been their own son, clothed him in blue drugget, and bought him a smart little Highland bonnet, in which dress he looked so charming that I would not let them have peace until I got one of the same. Indeed, all that Duncan said or did was to me a pattern ; for I loved him as my own life. At my own request, which he persuaded me to urge, I was permitted to be his bedfellow, and many a happy night and day did I spend with Duncan and Oscar.

As far as I remember, we felt no

privation of any kind, and would have been completely happy if it had not been for the fear of spirits. When the conversation chanced to turn upon the Piper of Dewar, the Maid of Plora, or the Pedlar of Thirlestane Mill, often have we lain with the bed-clothes drawn over our heads till nearly suffocated. We loved the fairies and the brownies, and even felt a little partiality for the mermaids, on account of their beauty and charming songs ; but we were a little jealous of the water-kelpies, and always kept aloof from the frightsome pools. We hated the devil most heartily, although we were not much afraid of him ; but a ghost ! oh, dreadful ! the names, ghost, spirit, or apparition, sounded in our ears like the knell of destruction, and our hearts sank within us, as if pierced by the cold icy shaft of death. Duncan herded my father's cows all the summer—so did I : we could not live asunder. We grew such expert fishers, that the speckled trout, with all his art, could not elude our machinations ; we forced him from his watery cove, admired the beautiful shades and purple drops that were painted on his sleek sides, and forthwith added him to our number without reluctance. We assailed the habitation of the wild bee, and rifled her of all her accumulated sweets, though not without encountering the most determined resistance. My father's meadows abounded with hives ; they were almost in every swath—in every hillock. When the swarm was large, they would beat us off, day after day. In all these desperate engagements Oscar came to our assistance, and, provided that none of the enemy made a lodgment in his lower defiles, he was always the last combatant of our party on the field. I do not remember of ever being so much diverted by any scene I ever witnessed, or laughing as immoderately as I have done at seeing Oscar involved in a moving cloud of wild bees, wheeling,

snapping on all sides, and shaking his ears incessantly.

The sagacity which this animal possessed is almost incredible, while his undaunted spirit and generosity would do honour to every servant of our own species to copy. Twice did he save his master's life; at one time when attacked by a furious bull, and at another time when he fell from behind my father, off a horse in a flooded river. Oscar had just swummed across, but instantly plunged in a second time to his master's rescue. He first got hold of his bonnet, but that coming off, he quitted it, and again catching him by the coat, brought him to the side, where my father reached him. He waked Duncan at a certain hour every morning, and would frequently turn the cows of his own will, when he observed them wrong. If Duncan dropped his knife, or any other small article, he would fetch it along in his mouth; and if sent back for a lost thing, would infallibly find it. When sixteen years of age, after being unwell for several days, he died one night below his master's bed. On the evening before, when Duncan came in from the plough, he came from his hiding-place, wagged his tail, licked Duncan's hand, and returned to his deathbed. Duncan and I lamented him with unfeigned sorrow, buried him below the old rowan tree at the back of my father's garden, placing a square stone at his head, which was still standing the last time I was there. With great labour, we composed an epitaph between us, which was once carved on that stone; the metre was good, but the stone was so hard, and the engraving so faint, that the characters, like those of our early joys, are long ago defaced and extinct.

Often have I heard my mother relate with enthusiasm the manner in which she and my father first discovered the dawnings of goodness and facility of conception in Duncan's mind, though,

I confess, dearly as I loved him, these circumstances escaped my observation. It was my father's invariable custom to pray with the family every night before they retired to rest, to thank the Almighty for his kindness to them during the bygone day, and to beg His protection through the dark and silent watches of the night. I need not inform any of my readers that that amiable (and now too much neglected and despised) duty consisted in singing a few stanzas of a psalm, in which all the family joined their voices with my father's, so that the double octaves of the various ages and sexes swelled the simple concert. He then read a chapter from the Bible, going straight on from beginning to end of the Scriptures. The prayer concluded the devotions of each evening, in which the downfall of antichrist was always strenuously urged, the ministers of the gospel remembered, nor was any friend or neighbour in distress forgot.

The servants of a family have, in general, liberty either to wait the evening prayers, or retire to bed as they incline, but no consideration whatever could induce Duncan to go one night to rest without the prayers, even though both wet and weary, and entreated by my parents to retire, for fear of catching cold. It seems that I had been of a more complaisant disposition; for I was never very hard to prevail with in this respect; nay, my mother used to say, that I was extremely apt to take a pain about my heart at that time of the night, and was, of course, frequently obliged to betake me to bed before the worship commenced.

It might be owing to this that Duncan's emotions on these occasions escaped my notice. He sung a treble to the old church tunes most sweetly, for he had a melodious voice; and when my father read the chapter, if it was in any of the historical parts of Scripture, he would lean upon the table,

and look him in the face, swallowing every sentence with the utmost avidity. At one time, as my father read the 45th chapter of Genesis, he wept so bitterly, that at the end my father paused, and asked what ailed him? Duncan told him that he did not know. At another time, the year following, my father, in the course of his evening devotions, had reached the 19th chapter of the book of Judges; when he began reading it, Duncan was seated on the other side of the house, but ere it was half done, he had stolen up close to my father's elbow. "Consider of it, take advice, and speak your minds," said my father, and closed the book. "Go on, go on, if you please, Sir," said Duncan — "go on, and let's hear what they said about it." My father looked sternly in Duncan's face, but seeing him abashed on account of his hasty breach of decency, without uttering a word, he again opened the Bible, and read the 20th chapter throughout, notwithstanding of its great length. Next day Duncan was walking about with the Bible below his arm, begging of every one to read it to him again and again. This incident produced a conversation between my parents, on the expenses and utility of education; the consequence of which was, that the week following, Duncan and I were sent to the parish school, and began at the same instant to the study of that most important and fundamental branch of literature, the A, B, C; but my sister Mary, who was older than I, was already an accurate and elegant reader.

This reminds me of another anecdote of Duncan, with regard to family worship, which I have often heard related, and which I myself may well remember. My father happening to be absent over night at a fair, when the usual time of worship arrived, my mother desired a lad, one of the servants, to act as chaplain for that night; the lad declined it, and slunk away to his bed. My mother

testified her regret that we should all be obliged to go prayerless to our beds for that night, observing, that she did not remember the time when it had so happened before. Duncan said he thought we might contrive to manage it amongst us, and instantly proposed to sing the psalm and pray, if Mary would read the chapter. To this my mother, with some hesitation, agreed, remarking, that if he prayed as he could, with a pure heart, his prayer had as good a chance of being accepted as some others that were "better worded." Duncan could not then read, but having learned several psalms from Mary by rote, he caused her to seek out the place, and sung the 23d Psalm from end to end with great sweetness and decency. Mary read a chapter in the New Testament, and then (my mother having a child on her knee) we three kneeled in a row, while Duncan prayed thus:—"O Lord, be Thou our God, our guide, and our guard unto death, and through death,"—that was a sentence my father often used in prayer; Duncan had laid hold of it, and my mother began to think that he had often prayed previous to that time. "O Lord, Thou"—continued Duncan; but his matter was exhausted; a long pause ensued, which I at length broke by bursting into a loud fit of laughter. Duncan rose hastily, and without once lifting up his head, went crying to his bed; and as I continued to indulge in laughter, my mother, for my irreverent behaviour, struck me across the shoulders with the tongs. Our evening devotions terminated exceedingly ill; I went crying to my bed after Duncan, even louder than he, and abusing him for his "useless prayer," for which I had been nearly felled.

By the time that we were recalled from school to herd the cows, next summer, we could both read the Bible with considerable facility, but Duncan far excelled me in perspicacity; and so fond was he of reading Bible history

that the reading of it was now our constant amusement. Often have Mary and he and I lain under the same plaid by the side of the corn or meadow, and read chapter about in the Bible for hours together, weeping over the failings and fall of good men, and wondering at the inconceivable might of the heroes of antiquity. Never was man so delighted as Duncan was when he came to the history of Samson, and afterwards of David and Goliath ; he could not be satisfied until he had read it to every individual with whom he was acquainted, judging it to be as new and as interesting to every one as it was to himself. I have seen him standing by the girls as they were milking the cows, reading to them the feats of Samson ; and, in short, harassing every man and woman about the hamlet for audience. On Sundays, my parents accompanied us to the fields, and joined in our delightful exercise.

Time passed away, and so also did our youthful delights ; but other cares and other pleasures awaited us. As we advanced in years and strength, we quitted the herding, and bore a hand in the labours of the farm. Mary, too, was often our assistant. She and Duncan were nearly of an age ; he was tall, comely, and affable ; and if Mary was not the prettiest girl in the parish, at least Duncan and I believed her to be so, which, with us, amounted to the same thing. We often compared the other girls in the parish with one another, as to their beauty and accomplishments, but to think of comparing any of them with Mary was entirely out of the question. She was, indeed, the emblem of truth, simplicity, and innocence, and if there were few more beautiful, there were still fewer so good and amiable ; but still, as she advanced in years, she grew fonder and fonder of being near Duncan ; and by the time she was nineteen, was so deeply in love that it affected her manner, her

spirits, and her health. At one time she was gay and frisky as a kitten ; she would dance, sing, and laugh violently at the most trivial incidents. At other times she was silent and sad, while a languishing softness overspread her features, and added greatly to her charms. The passion was undoubtedly mutual between them ; but Duncan, either from a sense of honour, or some other cause, never declared himself farther on the subject than by the most respectful attention and tender assiduities. Hope and fear thus alternately swayed the heart of poor Mary, and produced in her deportment that variety of affections which could not fail of rendering the sentiments of her artless bosom legible to the eye of experience.

In this state matters stood, when an incident occurred which deranged our happiness at once, and the time arrived when the kindest and most affectionate little social band of friends that ever pantied to meet the wishes of each other were obliged to part.

About forty years ago, the flocks of southern sheep, which have since that period inundated the Highlands, had not found their way over the Grampian Mountains ; and the native flocks of that sequestered country were so scanty that it was found necessary to transport small quantities of wool annually to the north, to furnish materials for clothing the inhabitants. During two months of each summer, the hill countries of the Lowlands were inundated by hundreds of women from the Highlands, who bartered small articles of dress, and of domestic import, for wool ; these were known by the appellation of "norlan' netties," and few nights passed, during the wool season, that some of them were not lodged at my father's house. It was from two of these that Duncan learned one day who and what he was ; that he was the Laird of Glenellich's only son and heir, and that a large sum had been offered to any person that

could discover him. My parents certainly rejoiced in Duncan's good fortune, yet they were disconsolate at parting with him ; for he had long ago become as a son of their own ; and I seriously believe, that from the day they first met, to that on which the two "norlan' netties" came to our house, they never once entertained the idea of parting. For my part, I wished that the "netties" had never been born, or that they had stayed at their own home ; for the thought of being separated from my dear friend made me sick at heart. All our feelings were, however, nothing when compared with those of my sister Mary. From the day that the two women left our house, she was no more seen to smile ; she had never yet divulged the sentiments of her heart to any one, and imagined her love for Duncan a profound secret,—no,

She never told her love ;
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek ;—she pined in
thought ;
And, with a green and yellow melancholy,
She sat like patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief.

Our social glee and cheerfulness were now completely clouded ; we sat down to our meals, and rose from them in silence. Of the few observations that passed, every one seemed the progeny of embarrassment and discontent, and our general remarks were strained and cold. One day at dinner-time, after a long and sullen pause, my father said, "I hope you do not intend to leave us very soon, Duncan?" "I am thinking of going away to-morrow, sir," said Duncan. The knife fell from my mother's hand ; she looked him steadily in the face for the space of a minute. "Duncan," said she, her voice faltering, and the tears dropping from her eyes,— "Duncan, I never durst ask you before, but I hope you will not leave us altogether?" Duncan thrust the plate from before him into the middle of the table—took up a book that lay on the

window, and looked over the pages. Mary left the room. No answer was returned, nor any further inquiry made ; and our little party broke up in silence.

When we met again in the evening, we were still all sullen. My mother tried to speak of indifferent things, but it was apparent that her thoughts had no share in the words that dropped from her tongue. My father at last said, "You will soon forget us, Duncan ; but there are some among us who will not soon forget you." Mary again left the room, and silence ensued, until the family were called together for evening worship. There was one sentence in my father's prayer that night which I think I yet remember, word for word. It may appear of little importance to those who are nowise interested, but it affected us deeply, and left not a dry cheek in the family. It runs thus—"We are an unworthy little flock Thou seest here kneeling before Thee, our God ; but, few as we are, it is probable we shall never all kneel again together before Thee in this world. We have long lived together in peace and happiness, and hoped to have lived so much longer ; but since it is Thy will that we part, enable us to submit to that will with firmness ; and though Thou scatter us to the four winds of heaven, may Thy almighty arm still be about us for good, and grant that we may all meet hereafter in another and a better world."

The next morning, after a restless night, Duncan rose early, put on his best suit, and packed up some little articles to carry with him. I lay panting and trembling, but pretended to be fast asleep. When he was ready to depart, he took his bundle below his arm, came up to the side of the bed, and listened if I was sleeping. He then stood long hesitating, looking wistfully to the door, and then to me, alternately ; and I saw him three or four times wipe his eyes. At length he shook me gently by the

shoulder, and asked if I was awake. I feigned to start, and answered as if half asleep.

"I must bid you farewell," said he, groping to get hold of my hand.

"Will you not breakfast with us, Duncan?" said I.

"No," said he, "I am thinking that it is best to steal away, for it would break my heart to take leave of your parents, and—"

"Who, Duncan?" said I.

"And you," said he.

"Indeed, but it is not best, Duncan," said I; "we will all breakfast together for the last time, and then take a formal and kind leave of each other."

We did breakfast together, and as the conversation turned on former days, it became highly interesting to us all. When my father had returned thanks to Heaven for our meal, we knew what was coming, and began to look at each other. Duncan rose, and after we had all loaded him with our blessings and warmest wishes, he embraced my parents and me. He turned about. His eyes said plainly, "There is somebody still wanting," but his heart was so full, he could not speak.

"What is become of Mary?" said my father. Mary was gone. We searched the house, the garden, and the houses of all the cottagers, but she was nowhere to be found. Poor love-lorn, forsaken Mary! She had hid herself in the ancient yew that grows in front of the old ruin, that she might see her lover depart, without herself being seen, and might indulge in all the luxury of woe. Poor Mary! how often have I heard her sigh, and seen her eyes red with weeping, while the smile that played on her languid features, when aught was mentioned in Duncan's commendation, would have melted a heart of adamant.

I must pass over Duncan's journey to the north Highlands; but on the evening of the sixth day after leaving

my father's house, he reached the mansion-house of Glenellich, which stands in a little beautiful woody strath, commanding a view of part of the Hebrides; every avenue, tree, and rock was yet familiar to Duncan's recollection; and the feelings of his sensible heart, on approaching the abode of his father, whom he had long scarcely thought of, can only be conceived by a heart like his own. He had, without discovering himself, learned from a peasant that his father was still alive, but that he had never overcome the loss of his son, for whom he lamented every day; that his wife and daughter lorded it over him, holding his pleasure at naught, and rendered his age extremely unhappy; that they had expelled all his old farmers and vassals, and introduced the lady's vulgar, presumptuous relations, who neither paid him rents, honour, nor obedience.

Old Glenellich was taking his evening walk on the road by which Duncan descended the strath to his dwelling. He was pondering on his own misfortunes, and did not even deign to lift his eyes as the young stranger approached, but seemed counting the number of marks which the horses' hoofs had made on the way.

"Good e'en to you, sir," said Duncan. The old man started and stared him in the face, but with a look so unsteady and harassed, that he seemed incapable of distinguishing any lineament or feature of it.

"Good e'en, good e'en," said he, wiping his brow with his arm, and passing by.

What there was in the voice that struck him so forcibly it is hard to say. Nature is powerful. Duncan could not think of aught to detain him; and being desirous of seeing how matters went on about the house, thought it best to remain some days *incog.* He went into the fore-kitchen, conversed freely with the servants, and soon saw

his step-mother and sister appear. The former had all the insolence and ignorant pride of vulgarity raised to wealth and eminence ; the other seemed naturally of an amiable disposition, but was entirely ruled by her mother, who taught her to disdain her father, all his relations, and whomsoever he loved. On that same evening he came into the kitchen, where she then was chatting with Duncan, to whom she seemed attached at first sight.

"Lexy, my dear," said he, "did you see my spectacles?"

"Yes," said she ; "I think I saw them on your nose to-day at breakfast."

"Well, but I have lost them since," said he.

"You may take up the next you find then, sir," said she.

The servants laughed.

"I might well have known what information I would get of you," said he, regretfully.

"How can you speak in such a style to your father, my dear lady?" said Duncan. "If I were he I would place you where you should learn better manners. It ill becomes so pretty a young lady to address an old father thus."

"He!" said she, "who minds him? He's a dotard, an old whining, complaining, superannuated being, worse than a child."

"But consider his years," said Duncan ; "and, besides, he may have met with crosses and losses sufficient to sour the temper of a younger man. You should at all events pity and reverence, but never despise, your father."

The old lady now joined them.

"You have yet heard nothing, young man," said the old laird ; "if you saw how my heart is sometimes wrung. Yes, I have had losses indeed."

"You losses!" said his spouse ; "no; you have never had any losses that did not in the end turn out a vast profit."

"Do you then account the loss of a

loving wife and a son nothing?" said he.

"But have you not got a loving wife and a daughter in their room?" returned she. "The one will not waste your fortune as a prodigal son would have done, and the other will take care of both you and that, when you can no longer do either. The loss of your son, indeed! It was the greatest blessing you could have received!"

"Unfeeling woman," said he ; "but Heaven may yet restore that son to protect the grey hairs of his old father, and lay his head in an honoured grave."

The old man's spirits were quite gone ; he cried like a child ; his lady mimicked him, and at this his daughter and servants raised a laugh.

"Inhuman wretches!" said Duncan, starting up and pushing them aside, "thus to mock the feelings of an old man, even although he were not the lord and master of you all. But, take notice, the individual among you all that dares to offer such another insult to him, I'll roast on that fire."

The old man clung to Duncan, and looked him ruefully in the face.

"You impudent, beggarly vagabond!" said the lady, "do you know to whom you speak? Servants, turn that wretch out of the house, and hunt him with all the dogs in the kennel."

"Softly, softly, good lady," said Duncan, "take care that I do not turn you out of the house."

"Alas, good youth!" said the old laird ; "you little know what you are about ; for mercy's sake, forbear. You are brewing vengeance both for yourself and me."

"Fear not," said Duncan, "I will protect you with my life."

"Pray, may I ask you what is your name?" said the old man, still looking earnestly at him.

"That you may," replied Duncan ; "no man has so good a right to ask

anything of me as you have—I am Duncan Campbell, your own son."

"M-m-m-my son!" exclaimed the old man, and sunk back on a seat with a convulsive moan.

Duncan held him in his arms; he soon recovered, and asked many incoherent questions; looked at the two moles on his right leg, kissed him, and then wept on his bosom for joy.

"O God of heaven!" said he, "it is long since I could thank Thee heartily for anything; now, I do thank Thee, indeed, for I have found my son! my dear and only son!"

Contrary to what might have been expected, Duncan's pretty, only sister, Alexia, rejoiced most of all in his discovery. She was almost wild with joy at finding such a brother. The old lady, her mother, was said to have wept bitterly in private, but knowing that Duncan would be her master, she behaved to him with civility and respect. Everything was committed to his management, and he soon discovered that, besides a good clear estate, his father had personal funds to a great amount. The halls and cottages of Glenellich were filled with feasting, joy, and gladness.

It was not so at my father's house. Misfortunes seldom come singly. Scarcely had our feelings overcome the shock which they received by the loss of our beloved Duncan, when a more terrible misfortune overtook us. My father, by the monstrous ingratitude of a friend whom he trusted, lost at once the greater part of his hard-earned fortune. The blow came unexpectedly, and distracted his personal affairs to such a degree that an arrangement seemed almost totally impracticable. He struggled on with securities for several months; but perceiving that he was drawing his real friends into danger by their signing of bonds which he might never be able to redeem, he lost heart entirely, and yielded to the

torrent. Mary's mind seemed to gain fresh energy every day. The activity and diligence which she evinced in managing the affairs of the farm, and even in giving advice with regard to other matters, is quite incredible. Often have I thought what a treasure that inestimable girl would have been to an industrious man whom she loved. All our efforts availed nothing; my father received letters of horning on bills to a large amount, and we expected every day that he would be taken from us and dragged to a prison.

We were all sitting in our little room one day, consulting what was best to be done. We could decide upon nothing, for our case was desperate; we were fallen into a kind of stupor, but the window being up, a sight appeared that quickly thrilled every heart with the keenest sensations of anguish. Two men came riding sharply up by the back of the old school-house.

"Yonder are the officers of justice now," said my mother; "what shall we do?"

We hurried to the window, and all of us soon discerned that they were no other than some attorney, accompanied by a sheriff's officer. My mother entreated of my father to escape and hide himself until this first storm was overblown, but he would in no wise consent, assuring us that he had done nothing of which he was ashamed, and that he was determined to meet every one face to face, and let them do their worst; so, finding all our entreaties vain, we could do nothing but sit down and weep. At length we heard the noise of their horses at the door.

"You had better take the men's horses, James," said my father, "as there is no other man at hand."

"We will stay till they rap, if you please," said I.

The cautious officer did not, however, rap, but, afraid lest his debtor should make his escape, he jumped lightly

from his horse, and hasted into the house. When we heard him open the outer door, and his footsteps approaching along the entry, our hearts fainted within us. He opened the door and stepped into the room—it was Duncan! our own dearly beloved Duncan. The women uttered an involuntary scream of surprise, but my father ran and got hold of one hand, and I of the other; my mother, too, soon had him in her arms; but our embrace was short, for his eyes fixed on Mary, who stood trembling with joy and wonder in a corner of the room, changing her colour every moment. He snatched her up in his arms and kissed her lips, and ere ever she was aware, her arms had encircled his neck.

"O my dear Mary," said he, "my heart has been ill at ease since I left you, but I durst not then tell you a word of my mind, for I little knew how I was to find affairs in the place where I was going; but ah! you little illusive rogue, you owe me another for the one you cheated me out of then;" so saying, he pressed his lips again to her cheek, and then led her to a seat.

Duncan then recounted all his adventures to us, with every circumstance of

his good fortune. Our hearts were uplifted almost past bearing; all our cares and sorrows were now forgotten, and we were once more the happiest little group that ever perhaps sat together. Before the cloth was laid for dinner, Mary ran out to put on her white gown, and comb her yellow hair, but was surprised at meeting with a smart young gentleman in the kitchen with a scarlet neck on his coat and a gold-laced hat. Mary, having never seen so fine a gentleman, made him a low courtesy, and offered to conduct him to the room; but he smiled, and told her he was the squire's servant. We had all of us forgot to ask for the gentleman that came with Duncan.

Duncan and Mary walked for two hours in the garden that evening. We did not know what passed between them, but the next day he asked her in marriage of my parents, and never shall I forget the supreme happiness and gratitude that beamed in every face on that happy occasion. I need not tell my readers that my father's affairs were soon retrieved, or that I accompanied my dear Mary a bride to the Highlands, and had the satisfaction of saluting her as Mrs Campbell and Lady of Glenellich,

THE LILY OF LIDDISDALE.

BY PROFESSOR WILSON.

THE country all around rang with the beauty of Amy Gordon; and, although it was not known who first bestowed upon her the appellation, yet now she bore no other than the Lily of Liddisdale. She was the only child of a shepherd, and herself a shepherdess. Never had she been out of the valley in which she was born; but many had

come from the neighbouring districts just to look upon her as she rested with her flock on the hill-side, as she issued smiling from her father's door, or sat in her serener loveliness in the kirk on Sabbath-day. Sometimes there are living beings in nature as beautiful as in romance; reality surpasses imagination; and we see breathing, brighten-

ing, and moving before our eyes, sights dearer to our hearts than any we ever beheld in the land of sleep.

It was thus that all felt who looked on the Lily of Liddisdale. She had grown up under the dews, and breath, and light of heaven, among the solitary hills ; and now that she had attained to perfect womanhood, nature rejoiced in the beauty that gladdened the stillness of these undisturbed glens. Why should this one maiden have been created lovelier than all others ? In what did her surpassing loveliness consist ? None could tell ; for had the most imaginative poet described this maiden, something that floated around her, an air of felt but unspeakable grace and lustre, would have been wanting in his picture. Her face was pale, yet tinged with such a faint and leaf-like crimson, that though she well deserved the name of the Lily, yet was she at times also like unto the Rose. When asleep, or in silent thought, she was like the fairest of all the lilyed brood ; but, when gliding along the braes, or singing her songs by the river-side, she might well remind one of that other brighter and more dazzling flower. Amy Gordon knew that she was beautiful. She knew it from the eyes that in delight met hers, from the tones of so many gentle voices, from words of affection from the old, and love from the young, from the sudden smile that met her when, in the morning, she tied up at the little mirror her long raven hair, and from the face and figure that looked up to her when she stooped to dip her pitcher in the clear mountain-well. True that she was of lowly birth, and that her manners were formed in a shepherd's hut, and among shepherdesses on the hill. But one week passed in the halls of the highly-born would have sufficed to hide the little graceful symptoms of her humble lineage, and to equal her in elegance with those whom in beauty she had far excelled.

The sun and the rain had indeed touched her hands, but nature had shaped them delicate and small. Light were her footsteps upon the verdant turf, and through the birchwood glades and down the rocky dells she glided or bounded along, with a beauty that seemed at once native and alien there, like some creature of another clime that still had kindred with this—an Oriental antelope among the roes of a Scottish forest.

Amy Gordon had reached her nineteenth summer, and as yet she knew of love only as she had read of it in old Border songs and ballads. These ancient ditties were her delight ; and her silent soul was filled with wild and beautiful traditions. In them love seemed, for the most part, something sad, and, whether prosperous or unhappy, alike terminating in tears. In them the young maiden was spoken of as dying in her prime, of fever, consumption, or a pining heart ; and her lover, a gallant warrior, or a peaceful shepherd, killed in battle, or perishing in some midnight storm. In them, too, were sometimes heard blessed voices whispering affection beneath the greenwood tree, or among the shattered cliffs overgrown with light-waving trees in some long, deep, solitary glen. To Amy Gordon, as she chanted to herself, in the blooming or verdant desert, all these various traditional lays, love seemed a kind of beautiful superstition belonging to the memory of the dead. With such tales she felt a sad and pleasant sympathy ; but it was as with something far remote—although at times the music of her own voice, as it gave an affecting expression to feelings embodied in such artless words, touched a chord within her heart, that dimly told her that heart might one day have its own peculiar and overwhelming love.

The summer that was now shining had been calm and sunny beyond the memory of the oldest shepherd. Never had nature seemed so delightful to Amy's

eyes and to Amy's heart ; and never had she seemed so delightful to the eyes and the hearts of all who beheld her with her flock. Often would she wreath the sprigs of heather round her raven ringlets, till her dark hair was brightened with a galaxy of richest blossoms. Or dishevelling her tresses, and letting fall from them that shower of glowing and balmy pearls, she would bind them up again in simpler braiding, and fix on the silken folds two or three water-lilies, large, massy, and whiter than the snow. Necklaces did she wear in her playful glee, of the purple fruit that feeds the small birds in the moors, and beautiful was the gentle stain then visible over the blue veins of her milk-white breast. So were floating by the days of her nineteenth summer among the hills. The evenings she spent by the side of her greyheaded father—and the old man was blessed. Her nights passed in a world of gentle dreams.

But, though Amy Gordon knew not yet what it was to love, she was herself the object of as deep, true, tender, and passionate love, as ever swelled and kindled within a human breast. Her own cousin, Walter Harden, now lived and would have died for her, but had not hitherto ventured to tell his passion. He was a few years older than her, and had long loved her with the gentle purity of a brother's affection. Amy had no brother of her own, and always called Walter Harden by that endearing name. That very name of brother had probably so familiarised her heart towards him, that never had she thought of him, even for a single moment, in any other light. But, although he too called Amy sister, his heart burned with other feelings, and he must win her to be his bride, and possess her as his wife, or die. When she was a mere child he had led her by the hand—when a fair girl he had in his arms lifted her across the swollen burns, and over the snow-drifts—now that she was a woman

he had looked on her in silence, but with a soul overcharged with a thousand thoughts, hopes, and desires, which he feared to speak of to her ear ; for he knew, and saw, and felt, in sorrow, that she loved him but as a brother. He knew, however, that she loved none else ; and in that—and that alone—was his hope,—so he at last determined to woo the Lily of Liddisdale, and win her, in her beauty and fragrance, to bloom within his house.

The Lily was sitting alone in a deep hollow among the hills, with her sheep and lambs pasturing or playing around her, while over that little secluded circle a single hawk was hanging far up in the sky. She was glad, but not surprised, to see her brother standing beside her ; and when he sat down by her side, and took her hand into his, she looked upon him with a gentle smile, and asked if he was going upon business further on among the hills. Walter Harden instantly poured forth, in a torrent, the passion of his soul, beseeched her not to shut up her sweet bosom against him, but to promise to become, before summer was over, his wedded wife. He spoke with fervour but trepidation ; kissed her cheek ; and then awaited, with a fast-throbbing and palpitating heart, his Amy's reply.

There was no guile, no art, no hypocrisy in the pure and happy heart of the Lily of Liddisdale. She took not away her hand from that of him who pressed it ; she rose not up from the turf, although her gentle side just touched his heart ; she turned not away her face so beautiful, nor changed the silvery sweetness of her speech. Walter Harden was such a man as in a war of freemen, defending their mountains against a tyrant, would have advanced his plume in every scene of danger, and have been chosen a leader among his pastoral compeers. Amy turned her large beaming hazel eyes upon his face, and saw that it was overshadowed.

There was something in its expression too sad and solemn, mingling with the flush of hope and passion, to suffer her, with playful or careless words, to turn away from herself the meaning of what she had heard. Her lover saw in her kind but unagitated silence, that to him she was but a sister ; and, rising to go, he said, “Blessed be thou all the days of thy life ; farewell, my sweet Amy, farewell !”

But they did not thus part. They walked together on the lonely hill-side, down the banks of the little wimpling burn, and then out of one small glen into another, and their talk was affectionate and kind. Amy heard him speak of feelings to her unknown, and almost wondered that she could be so dear to him, so necessary to his life, as he passionately vowed. Nor could such vows be unpleasant to her ear, uttered by that manly voice, and enforced by the silent speech of those bold but gentle eyes. She concealed nothing from him, but frankly confessed, that hitherto she had looked upon him even as her own father’s son. “Let us be happy, Walter, as we have been so long. I cannot marry you—oh—no—no ; but since you say it would kill you if I married another, then I swear to you by all that is sacred—yes, by the Bible on which we have often read together, and by yonder sun setting over the Windhead, that you never will see that day.” Walter Harden was satisfied ; he spoke of love and marriage no more ; and in the sweet, fresh, airless, and dewy quiet of evening, they walked together down into the inhabited vale, and parted, almost like brother and sister, as they had been used to do for so many happy years.

Soon after this, Amy was sent by her father to the Priory, the ancient seat of the Elliots, with some wicker-baskets which they had made for the young ladies there. A small plantation of willows was in the corner of the meadow

in which their cottage stood, and from them the old shepherd and his daughter formed many little articles of such elegance and ingenuity, that they did not seem out of place even in the splendid rooms of the Priory. Amy had slung some of these pieces of rural workmanship round her waist, while some were hanging on her arms, and thus she was gliding along a footpath through the old elm-woods that shelter the Priory, when she met young George Elliot, the heir of that ancient family, going out with his angle to the river-side. The youth, who had but a short time before returned from England, where he had been for several years, knew at the first glance that the fair creature before him could be no other than the Lily of Liddisdale. With the utmost gentleness and benignity he called her by that name, and after a few words of courtesy, he smilingly asked her for one small flower-basket to keep for her sake. He unloosened one from her graceful waist, and with that liberty which superior rank justified, but, at the same time, with that tenderness which an amiable mind prompted, he kissed her fair forehead, and they parted—she to the Priory, and he down to the linn at the Cushat-wood.

Never had the boy beheld a creature so perfectly beautiful. The silence and the songs of morning were upon the dewy woods, when that vision rose before him ; his soul was full of the joy of youth ; and when Amy disappeared, he wondered how he could have parted so soon—in a few moments—from that bright and beaming Dryad. Smiles had been in her eyes and round her pearly teeth while they spoke together, and he remembered the soft and fragrant lock of hair that touched his lips as he gently kissed her forehead. The beauty of that living creature sank into his soul along with all the sweet influences of nature now rejoicing in the full, ripe, rich spirit of summer, and in fancy he

saw that Lily springing up in every glade through which he was now roaming, and when he had reached the linn, on the bank too of every romantic nook and bay where the clear waters eddied or slept. "She must recross the bridge on her way home," said the enamoured boy to himself; and, fearing that Amy Gordon might already be returning from the Priory, he clambered up the face of the shrubby precipice, and, bounding over the large green mossy stones, and through the entangling briars and brushwood, he soon was at the bridge, and sat down on a high bank, under a cliff, commanding a view of the path by which the fair maiden must approach on her homeward journey.

The heart of the innocent Amy had fluttered, too, as the tall, slim, graceful stripling had kissed her brow. No rudeness, no insult, no pride, no haughty freedom had been in his demeanour towards her; but she felt gladly conscious in her mind, that he had been delighted with her looks, and would, perhaps, think now and then afterwards, as he walked through the woods, of the shepherd's daughter, with whom he had not disdained to speak. Amy thought, while she half looked back, as he disappeared among the trees, that he was just such a youth as the old minstrels sang of in their war or love ballads, and that he was well worthy some rich and noble bride, whom he might bring to his hall on a snow-white palfrey with silken reins, and silver bells on its mane. And she began to recite to herself, as she walked along, one of those old Border tales.

Amy left her baskets at the Priory, and was near the bridge, on her return, when she beheld the young heir spring down from the bank before her, and come forward with a sparkling countenance. "I must have that sweet tress that hangs over thy sweeter forehead," said he, with a low and eager

voice; "and I will keep it for the sake of the fairest Flower that ever bloomed in my father's woods—even the Lily of Liddisdale." The lock was given—for how could it be refused? And the shepherdess saw the young and high-born heir of the Priory put it into his breast. She proceeded across the hill, down the long Falcon-glen, and through the Witch-wood—and still he was by her side. There was a charm in his speech, and in every word he said, and in his gentle demeanour, that touched poor Amy's very heart; and as he gave her assistance, although all unneeded, over the uneven hollows, and the springs and marshes, she had neither the courage, nor the wish, nor the power, to request him to turn back to the Priory. They entered a small quiet green circlet, bare of trees, in the bosom of a coppice-wood; and the youth, taking her hand, made her sit down on the mossy trunk of a fallen yew, and said—"Amy—my fair Amy!—before we part, will you sing me one of your old Border songs? and let it be one of love. Did not the sons of nobles, long ago, often love the daughters of them that dwelt in hets?"

Amy Gordon sat there an hour with the loving, but honourable boy, and sang many a plaintive tune, and recited many a romantic story. She believed every word she uttered, whether of human lovers, or of the affection of fairies, the silent creatures of the woods and knowes, towards our race. For herself, she felt a constant wild delight in fictions, which to her were all as truths; and she was glad and proud to see how they held in silent attention him at whose request she recited or sang. But now she sprang to her feet, and, beseeching him to forgive the freedom she had used in thus venturing to speak so long in such a presence, but at the same time remembering that a lock of her hair was near his heart, and perceiving that the little basket

she had let him take was half filled with wild-flowers, the Lily of Liddisdale made a graceful obeisance, and disappeared. Nor did the youth follow her—they had sat together for one delightful hour—and he returned by himself to the Priory.

From this day the trouble of a new delight was in the heart of young Elliot. The spirit of innocence was blended with that of beauty all over Amy, the shepherdess ; and it was their perfect union that the noble boy so dearly loved. Yet what could she be to him more than a gleam of rainbow light—a phantom of the woods—an imagination that passed away into the silence of the far-off green pastoral hills? She belonged almost to another world—another life. His dwelling, and that of his forefathers, was a princely hall. She, and all her nameless line, were dwellers in turf-built huts. “In other times,” thought he, “I might have transplanted that Lily into mine own garden ; but these are foolish fancies ! Am I in love with poor Amy Gordon, the daughter of a shepherd?” As these thoughts were passing through his mind, he was bounding along a ridge of hills, from which many a sweet vale was visible ; and he formed a sudden determination to visit the cottage of Amy’s father, which he had seen some years ago pointed out when he was with a gay party of lords and ladies, on a visit to the ruins of Hermitage Castle. He bounded like a deer along ; and as he descended into a little vale, lo ! on a green mound, the Lily of Liddisdale herding her sheep !

Amy was half terrified to see him standing in his graceful beauty before her in that solitary place. In a moment her soul was disquieted within her, and she felt that it indeed was love. She wished that she might sink into that verdant mound, from which she vainly strove to rise, as the impassioned youth lay down on the turf at her side, and,

telling her to fear nothing, called her by a thousand tender and endearing names. Never till he had seen Amy had he felt one tremor of love ; but now his heart was kindled, and in that utter solitude, where all was so quiet and so peaceful, there seemed to him a preternatural charm over all her character. He burst out into passionate vows and prayers, and called God to witness, that if she would love him, he would forget all distinction of rank, and marry his beautiful Amy, and she should live yet in his own hall. The words were uttered, and there was silence. Their echo sounded for a moment strange to his own ears ; but he fixed his soul upon her countenance, and repeated them over and over again with wilder emphasis, and more impassioned utterance. Amy was confounded with fear and perplexity ; but when she saw him kneeling before her, the meek, innocent, humble girl could not endure the sight, and said, “Sir, behold in me one willing to be your servant. Yes, willing is poor Amy Gordon to kiss your feet. I am a poor man’s daughter. Oh, sir ! you surely came not hither for evil ? No—no, evil dwells not in such a shape. Away then—away then, my noble master ; for if Walter Harden were to see you !—if my old father knew this, his heart would break !”

Once more they parted. Amy returned home in the evening at the usual hour ; but there was no peace now for her soul. Such intense and passionate love had been vowed to her—such winning and delightful expressions whispered into her heart by one so far above her in all things, but who felt no degradation in equalling her to him in the warmth and depth of his affection, that she sometimes strove to think it all but one of her wild dreams awakened by some verse or incident in some old ballad. But she had felt his kisses on her cheek ; his thrilling voice was in her soul ; and she was oppressed with

a passion, pure, it is true, and most innocently humble, but a passion that seemed to be like life itself, never to be overcome, and that could cease only when the heart he had deluded—for what else than delusion could it be?—ceased to beat. Thus agitated, she had directed her way homewards with hurried and heedless steps. She minded not the miry pits—the quivering marshes—and the wet rushy moors. Instead of crossing the little sinuous moorland streams at their narrow places, where her light feet used to bound across them, she waded through them in her feverish anxiety, and sometimes, after hurrying along the braes, she sat suddenly down, breathless, weak, and exhausted, and retraced in weeping bewilderment all the scene of fear, joy, endearments, caresses, and wild persuasions, from which she had torn herself away, and escaped. On reaching home, she went to her bed trembling, and shivering, and drowned in tears; and could scarcely dare, much as she needed comfort, even to say her prayers. Amy was in a high fever; during the night she became delirious; and her old father sat by her bedside till morning, fearing that he was going to lose his child.

There was grief over the great strath and all its glens when the rumour spread over them that Amy Gordon was dying. Her wonderful beauty had but given a tenderer and brighter character to the love which her unsullied innocence and simple goodness had universally inspired; and it was felt, even among the sobs of a natural affection, that if the Lily of Liddisdale should die, something would be taken away of which they were all proud, and from whose lustre there was a diffusion over their own lives. Many a gentle hand touched the closed door of her cottage, and many a low voice inquired how God was dealing with her; but where now was Walter Har-

den when his Lily was like to fade? He was at her bed's foot, as her father was at its head. Was she not his sister, although she would not be his bride? And when he beheld her glazed eyes wandering unconsciously in delirium, and felt her blood throbbing so rapidly in her beautiful transparent veins, he prayed to God that Amy might recover, even although her heart were never to be his, even although it were to fly to the bosom of him whose name she constantly kept repeating in her wandering fantasies. For Amy, although she sometimes kindly whispered the name of Walter Harden, and asked why her brother came not to see her on her deathbed, yet far oftener spake beseechingly and passionately as if to that other youth, and implored him to break not the heart of a poor simple shepherdess who was willing to kiss his feet.

Neither the father of poor Amy nor Walter Harden had known before that she had ever seen young George Elliot—but they soon understood, from the innocent distraction of her speech, that the noble boy had left pure the Lily he loved, and Walter said that it belonged not to that line ever to enjure the helpless. Many a pang it gave him, no doubt, to think that his Amy's heart, which all his life-long tenderness could not win, had yielded itself up in tumultuous joy to one—two—three meetings of an hour, or perhaps only a few minutes, with one removed so high and so far from her humble life and all its concerns. These were cold, sickening pangs of humiliation and jealousy, that might, in a less generous nature, have crushed all love. But it was not so with him; and cheerfully would Walter Harden have taken the burning fever into his own veins, so that it could have been removed from hers—cheerfully would he have laid down his own manly head on that pillow, so that Amy could have lifted up her long raven tresses, now often miser-

ably dishevelled in her raving, and, braiding them once more, walk out well and happy into the sunshine of the beautiful day, rendered more beautiful still by her presence. Hard would it have been to have resigned her bosom to any human touch ; but hideous seemed it beyond all thought to resign it to the touch of death. Let heaven but avert that doom, and his affectionate soul felt that it could be satisfied.

Out of a long deep trance-like sleep Amy at last awoke, and her eyes fell upon the face of Walter Harden. She regarded long and earnestly its pitying and solemn expression, then pressed her hand to her forehead and wept. "Is my father dead and buried—and did he die of grief and shame for his Amy? Oh ! that needed not have been, for I am innocent. Neither, Walter, have I broken, nor will I ever break, my promise unto thee. I remember it well—by the Bible—and yon setting sun. But I am weak and faint. Oh ! tell me, Walter ! all that has happened ! Have I been ill—for hours—or for days—or weeks—or months ? For that I know not,—so wild and so strange, so sad and so sorrowful, so miserable and so wretched, have been my many thousand dreams !"

There was no concealment and no disguise. Amy was kindly and tenderly told by her father and her brother all that she had uttered, as far as they understood it, during her illness. Nor had the innocent creature anything more to tell. Her soul was after the fever calm, quiet, and happy. The form, voice, and shape of that beautiful youth were to her little more now than the words and the sights of a dream. Sickness and decay had brought her spirit back to all the humble and tranquil thoughts and feelings of her lowly life. In the woods, and among the hills, that bright and noble being had for a time touched her senses, her heart, her soul, and her imagination. All was

new, strange, stirring, overwhelming, irresistible, and paradise to her spirit. But it was gone ; and might it stay away for ever : so she prayed, as her kind brother lifted up her head with his gentle hand, and laid it down as gently on the pillow he had smoothed. "Walter ! I will be your wife ! for thee my affection is calm and deep,—but that other—oh ! that was only a passing dream !" Walter leaned over her, and kissed her pale lips. "Yes ! Walter," she continued, "I once promised to marry none other, but now I promise to marry thee ; if indeed God will forgive me for such words, lying as I am, perhaps, on my deathbed. I utter them to make you happy. If I live, life will be dear to me only for thy sake ; if I die, walk thou along with my father at the coffin's head, and lay thine Amy in the mould. I am the Lily of Liddisdale,—you know that was once the vain creature's name !—and white, pale, and withered enough indeed is, I trow, the poor Lily now !"

Walter Harden heard her affectionate words with a deep delight, but he determined in his soul not to bind Amy down to these promises, sacred and fervent as they were, if, on her complete recovery, he discovered that they originated in gratitude, and not in love. From pure and disinterested devotion of spirit did he watch the progress of her recovery, nor did he ever allude to young Elliot but in terms of respect and admiration. Amy had expressed her surprise that he had never come to inquire how she was during her illness, and added with a sigh, "Love at first sight cannot be thought to last long. Yet surely he would have wept to hear that I was dead." Walter then told her that he had been hurried away to France the very day after she had seen him, to attend the deathbed of his father, and had not yet returned to Scotland ; but that the ladies of the Priory had sent a messenger to know

how she was every day, and that to their kindness were owing many of the conveniences she had enjoyed. Poor Amy was glad to hear that she had no reason to think the noble boy would have neglected her in her illness ; and she could not but look with pride upon her lover, who was not afraid to vindicate the character of one who, she had confessed, had been but too dear to her only a few weeks ago. This generosity and manly confidence on the part of her cousin quite won and subdued her heart, and Walter Harden never approached her now without awaking in her bosom something of that delightful agitation and troubled joy which her simple heart had first suffered in the presence of her young, noble lover. Amy was in love with Walter almost as much as he was with her, and the names of brother and sister, pleasant as they had ever been, were now laid aside.

Amy Gordon rose from her sickbed, and even as the flower whose name she bore, did she again lift up her drooping head beneath the dews and the sunshine. Again did she go to the hill-side, and sit and sing beside her flock. But Walter Harden was oftener with her than before, and ere the harvest moon should hang her mild, clear, unhaloed orb over the late reapers on the upland grain-fields, had Amy promised that she would become his wife. She saw him now in his own natural light—the best, the most intelligent, the most industrious, and the handsomest shepherd over all the hills ; and when it was known that there was to be a marriage between Walter Harden and Amy Gordon, none felt surprised, although some, sighing, said it was seldom, indeed, that fortune so allowed those to wed whom nature had united.

The Lily of Liddisdale was now bright and beautiful as ever, and was returning homewards by herself from the far-off hills during one rich golden

sunset, when, in a dark hollow, she heard the sound of horses' feet, and in an instant young George Elliot was at her side. Amy's dream was over—and she looked on the beautiful youth with an unquaking heart. "I have been far away, Amy,—across the seas. My father—you may have heard of it—was ill, and I attended his bed. I loved him, Amy—I loved my father—but he is dead!" and here the noble youth's tears fell fast. "Nothing now but the world's laugh prevents me making you my wife—yes, my wife, sweetest Lily ; and what care I for the world? for thou art both earth and heaven to me."

The impetuous, ardent, and impassioned boy scarcely looked in Amy's face ; he remembered her confusion, her fears, her sighs, her tears, his half-permitted kisses, his faintly repelled embraces, and all his suffered endearments of brow, lip, and cheek, in that solitary dell ; so with a powerful arm he lifted her upon another steed, which, till now, she had scarcely observed ; other horsemen seemed to the frightened, and speechless, and motionless maiden to be near ; and away they went over the smooth turf like the wind, till her eyes were blind with the rapid flight, and her head dizzy. She heard kind words whispering in her ear ; but Amy, since that fever, had never been so strong as before, and her high-blooded palfrey was now carrying her fleetly away over hill and hollow in a swoon.

At last she seemed to be falling down from a height, but softly, as if borne on the wings of the air ; and as her feet touched the ground, she knew that young Elliot had taken her from that fleet courser, and, looking up, she saw that she was in a wood of old shadowy trees of gigantic size, perfectly still, and far away from all known dwellings both on hill and plain. But a cottage was before her, and she and young Elliot were on the green in its

front. It was thickly covered with honeysuckle and moss-roses that hung their beautiful full-blown shining lamps high as the thatched roof ; and Amy's soul sickened at the still, secluded, lovely, and lonely sight. "This shall be our bridal abode," whispered her lover into her ear, with panting breath. "Fear me not—distrust me not; I am not base, but my love to thee is tender and true. Soon shall we be married—ay, this very evening must thou be mine ; and may the hand that now clasps thy sweet waist wither, and the tongue that woos thee be palsied, if ever I cease to love thee as my Amy—my Lily—my wedded wife!"

The wearied and half-fainting maiden could as yet make no reply. The dream that she had believed was gone for ever now brightened upon her in the intense light of reality, and it was in her power to become the wife of him for whom she had, in the innocence and simplicity of her nature, once felt a consuming passion that had brought her to the brink of the grave. His warm breath was on her bosom ; words charged with bewitching persuasion went thrilling through her heartstrings ; and if she had any pride (and what human heart has it not?) it might well mingle now with love, and impel her into the embrace that was now open to clasp her close to a burning heart.

A stately and beautiful lady came smiling from the cottage door, and Amy knew that it was the sister of Elliot, and kneeled down before her. Last time the shepherdess had seen that lady, it was when, with a fearful step, she took her baskets into the hall, and blushing, scarcely lifted up her eyes, when she and her high-born sisters deigned to commend her workmanship, and whisper to each other that the Lily of Liddisdale deserved her name. "Amy," said she, with a gentle voice, as she took her hand, "Amy Gordon ! my brother loves you ;

and he has won me to acknowledge you as my sister. I can deny my brother nothing ; and his grief has brought low the pride—perhaps the foolish pride—of my heart. Will you marry him, Amy ? Will you, the daughter of a poor shepherd, marry the young heir of the Priory, and the descendant, Amy, of a noble race ? Amy, I see that thou art beautiful ; I know that thou art good ; may God and my mother forgive me this, but my sister must thou be ; behold my brother is at his shepherdess's feet !"

Amy Gordon had now nothing to fear. That sweet, young, pure, noble lady was her friend ; and she felt persuaded now that in good truth young Elliot wished to make her his wife. Might she indeed live the Lady of the Priory—be a sister to these beautiful creatures—dwell among those ancient woods, and all those spacious lawns and richest gardens ; and might she be, not in a dream, but in living reality, the wife of him on whose bosom her heart had died with joy in that lonely dell, and love him and yield him her love even unto the very hour till she was dead ? Such changes of estate had been long ago, and sung of in many a ballad ; and was she to be the one maiden of millions, the one born in hundreds of years, to whom this blessed lot was to befall ? But these thoughts passed on and away like sun-rays upon a stream ; the cloud, not a dark one, of reality returned over her. She thought of Walter Harden, and in an instant her soul was fixed ; nor from that instant could it be shaken by terror or by love, by the countenance of death, or the countenance, far more powerful than of death—that of the youth before her, pale and flushed alternately with the fluctuations of many passions.

Amy felt in her soul the collected voice, as it were, of many happy and humble years among her hills, and that told her not to forsake her own natural

life. The flower that lived happily and beautifully in its own secluded nook, by the side of the lonely tarn or torrent, might lose much both of its fragrance and its lustre, when transplanted into a richer soil and more sheltered bed. Could she forget for ever her father's ingle—the earthen floor—its simple furniture of day and night? Could she forget all the familiar places round about the hut where she was born? And if she left them all, and was taken up even in the arms of love into another sphere of life, would not that be the same, or worse than to forget them, and would it not be sacrilege to the holiness of the many Sabbath nights on which she had sat at her widowed father's knees? Yet might such thoughts have been destroyed in her beating heart by the whispered music of young Elliot's eloquent and impassioned voice. But Walter Harden, though ignorant of her present jeopardy, seemed to stand before her, and she remembered his face when he sat beside her dying bed, his prayers over her when he thought she slept, and their oaths of fidelity mutually sworn before the great God.

"Will you, my noble and honoured master, suffer me, all unworthy as I am to be yours, to leave your bosom? Sir, I am too miserable about you, to pretend to feel any offence, because you will not let me go. I might well be proud of your love, since, indeed, it happens so that you do love me; but let me kneel down at your beautiful sister's feet, for to her I may be able to speak—to you I feel that it may not be, for humble am I, although unfortunately I have found favour in your eyes."

The agitated youth released Amy from his arms, and she flung herself down upon her knees before that lovely lady.

"Lady! hear me speak—a simple uneducated girl of the hills, and tell me if you would wish to hear me break an oath sworn upon the Bible, and so

to lose my immortal soul? So have I sworn to be the wife of Walter Harden—the wife of a poor shepherd; and, lady, may I be on the left hand of God at the great judgment-day, if ever I be forsown. I love Walter Harden. Do you counsel me to break his kind, faithful heart? Oh, sir—my noble young master! how dare a creature such as I speak so freely to your beautiful sister? how dare I keep my eyes open when you are at your servant's feet? Oh, sir, had I been born a lady, I would have lived—died for you—gone with you all over the world—all over the sea, and all the islands of the sea. I would have sighed, wept, and pined away, till I had won your love, for your love would have been a blessed thing—that do I well know, from the few moments you stooped to let your heart beat against the bosom of a low-born shepherdess. Even now, dearly as I love Walter Harden, fain would I lay me down and die upon this daisied green, and be buried beneath it, rather than that poor Amy Gordon should affect the soul of her young master thus; for never saw I, and never can I again see, a youth so beautiful, so winning, so overwhelming to a maiden's heart, as he before whom I now implore permission to grovel in the dust. Send me away—spurn me from you—let me crawl away out of your presence—I can find my way back to my father's house."

It might have been a trying thing to the pride of this high-minded and high-born youth, to be refused in marriage by the daughter of one of his poorest shepherds; so would it have been had he loved less; but all pride was extinguished, and so seemed for ever and ever the light of this world's happiness. To plead further he felt was in vain. Her soul had been given to another, and the seal of an oath set upon it, never to be broken but by the hand of death. So he lifted her up in his arms,

kissed her madly a hundred times, cheek, brow, neck, and bosom, and then rushed into the woods. Amy followed him with her streaming eyes, and then turned again towards the beautiful lady, who was sobbing audibly for her brother's sake.

"Oh! weep not, lady! that I, poor Amy Gordon, have refused to become the wife of your noble brother. The time will come, and soon too, when he and you, and your fair sisters and your stately mother, will all be thankful that I yielded not to entreaties that would then have brought disgrace upon your house! Never—never would your mother have forgiven you; and as for me, would not she have wished me dead and buried rather than the bride of her only and darling son? You know that, simple and innocent as I am, I now speak but the truth; and how, then, could your noble brother have continued to love me, who had brought dishonour, and disagreement, and distraction, among those who are now all so dear to one another? O yes—yes, he would soon have hated poor Amy Gordon, and, without any blame, perhaps broken my heart, or sent me away from the Priory back to my father's hut. Blessed be God, that all this evil has not been wrought by me! All—all will soon be as before."

She to whom Amy thus fervently spoke felt that her words were not wholly without truth. Nor could she help admiring the noble, heroic, and virtuous conduct of this poor shepherdess, whom all this world's temptations would have failed to lure from the right path. Before this meeting she had thought of Amy as far her inferior indeed, and it was long before her proper pride had yielded to the love of her brother, whose passion she feared might otherwise have led to some horrible catastrophe. Now that he had fled from them in distraction, this terror again possessed her, and she whis-

pered it to the pale, trembling shepherdess.

"Follow him—follow him, gentle lady, into the wood; lose not a moment; call upon him by name, and that sweet voice must bring him back. But fear not, he is too good to do evil; fear not, receive my blessing, and let me return to my father's hut; it is but a few miles, and that distance is nothing to one who has lived all her life among the hills. My poor father will think I have died in some solitary place."

The lady wept to think that she, whom she had been willing to receive as her sister, should return all by herself so many miles at night to a lonely hut. But her soul was sick with fear for her brother; so she took from her shoulders a long rich Indian silk scarf of gorgeous colours, and throwing it over Amy's figure, said, "Fair creature and good, keep this for my sake; and now, farewell!" She gazed on the Lily for a moment in delighted wonder at her graceful beauty, as she bent on one knee, enrobed in that unwonted garb, and then, rising up, gathered the flowing drapery around her, and disappeared.

"God, in His infinite mercy, be praised!" cried Walter Harden, as he and the old man, who had been seeking Amy for hours all over the hills, saw the Lily gliding towards them up a little narrow dell, covered from head to foot with the splendid raiment that shone in a soft shower of moonlight. Joy and astonishment for a while held them speechless, but they soon knew all that had happened; and Walter Harden lifted her up in his arms and carried her home, exhausted now and faint with fatigue and trepidation, as if she were but a lamb rescued from a snow-wreath.

Next moon was that which the reapers love, and before it had waned Amy slept in the bosom of her husband, Walter Harden. Years passed on,

and other flowers beside the Lily of Liddisdale were blooming in his house. One summer evening, when the shepherd, his fair wife, and their children were sitting together on the green before the door, enjoying probably the sight and the noise of the imps much more than the murmurs of the sylvan Liddal, which perhaps they did not hear, a gay cavalcade rode up to the cottage, and a noble-looking young man, dismounting from his horse, and gently assisting a beautiful lady to do the same, walked up to her whom he

had known only by a name now almost forgotten, and with a beaming smile said, "Fair Lily of Liddisdale, this is my wife, the lady of the Priory; come—it is hard to say which of you should bear off the bell." Amy rose from her seat with an air graceful as ever, but something more matronly than that of Elliot's younger bride; and while these two fair creatures beheld each other with mutual admiration, their husbands stood there equally happy, and equally proud—George Elliot of the Priory, and Walter Harden of the Glenfoot.

THE UNLUCKY PRESENT.

BY ROBERT CHAMBERS, LL.D.

A LANARKSHIRE minister (who died within the present century) was one of those unhappy persons who, to use the words of a well-known Scottish adage, "can never see any green cheese but their een reels." He was *extremely covetous*, and that not only of nice articles of food, but of many other things which do not generally excite the cupidity of the human heart. The following story is in corroboration of this assertion. Being on a visit one day at the house of one of his parishioners, a poor, lonely widow, living in a moorland part of the parish, Mr L—— became fascinated by the charms of a little cast-iron pot, which happened at the time to be lying on the hearth, full of potatoes for the poor woman's dinner, and that of her children. He had never in his life seen such a nice little pot. It was a perfect conceit of a thing. It was a gem. No pot on earth could match it in symmetry. It was an object altogether perfectly lovely.

"Dear sake! minister," said the widow, quite overpowered by the

reverend man's commendations of her pot; "if ye like the pot sae weel as a' that, I beg ye'll let me send it to the manse. It's a kind o' orra pot wi' us; for we've a bigger ane, that we use oftener, and that's mair convenient every way for us. Sae ye'll just tak a present o't. I'll send it ower the morn wi' Jamie, when he gangs to the schule."

"Oh," said the minister, "I can by no means permit you to be at so much trouble. Since you are so good as to give me the pot, I'll just carry it home with me in my hand. I'm so much taken with it, indeed, that I would really prefer carrying it myself."

After much altercation between the minister and the widow, on this delicate point of politeness, it was agreed that he should carry home the pot himself.

Off, then, he trudged, bearing this curious little culinary article alternately in his hand and under his arm, as seemed most convenient to him. Unfortunately, the day was warm, the way long, and the minister fat; so that he became

heartily tired of his burden before he had got half-way home. Under these distressing circumstances, it struck him that if, instead of carrying the pot awkwardly at one side of his person, he were to carry it on his head, the burden would be greatly lightened ; the principles of natural philosophy, which he had learned at college, informing him, that when a load presses directly and immediately upon any object, it is far less onerous than when it hangs at the remote end of a lever. Accordingly, doffing his hat, which he resolved to carry home in his hand, and having applied his handkerchief to his brow, he clapped the pot in inverted fashion upon his head, where, as the reader may suppose, it figured much like Mambrino's helmet upon the crazed capital of Don Quixote, only a great deal more magnificent in shape and dimensions. There was at first much relief and much comfort in this new mode of carrying the pot ; but mark the result. The unfortunate minister having taken a by-path to escape observation, found himself, when still a good way from home, under the necessity of leaping over a ditch, which intercepted him in passing from one field to another. He jumped ; but surely no jump was ever taken so completely *in*, or, at least, *into*, the dark as this. The concussion given to his person in descending, caused the helmet to become a hood : the pot slipped down over his face, and resting with its rim upon his neck, stuck fast there ; enclosing his whole head as completely as ever that of a new-born child was enclosed by the filmy bag with which nature, as an indication of future good fortune, sometimes invests the noddles of her favourite offspring. What was worst of all, the nose, which had permitted the pot to slip down over it, withstood every desperate attempt on the part of its proprietor to make it slip back again ; the contracted part or neck of the *patera* being of such a peculiar formation as to cling fast to the base of

the nose, although it found no difficulty in gliding along its hypothenuse. Was ever minister in a worse plight ? Was there ever *contretemps* so unlucky ? Did ever any man—did ever any minister—so effectually hoodwink himself, or so thoroughly shut his eyes to the plain light of nature ? What was to be done ? The place was lonely ; the way difficult and dangerous ; human relief was remote, almost beyond reach. It was impossible even to cry for help. Or, if a cry could be uttered, it might reach in deafening reverberation the ear of the utterer ; but it would not travel twelve inches farther in any direction. To add to the distresses of the case, the unhappy sufferer soon found great difficulty in breathing. What with the heat occasioned by the beating of the sun on the metal, and what with the frequent return of the same heated air to his lungs, he was in the utmost danger of suffocation. Everything considered, it seemed likely that, if he did not chance to be relieved by some accidental wayfarer, there would soon be *Death in the Pot*.

The instinctive love of life, however, is omni-prevalent : and even very stupid people have been found when put to the push by strong and imminent peril, to exhibit a degree of presence of mind, and exert a degree of energy, far above what might have been expected from them, or what they have ever been known to exhibit or exert under ordinary circumstances. So it was with the pot-enconced minister of C — . Pressed by the urgency of his distresses, he fortunately recollects that there was a smith's shop at the distance of about a mile across the fields, where, if he could reach it before the period of suffocation, he might possibly find relief. Deprived of his eyesight, he could act only as a man of feeling, and went on as cautiously as he could, with his hat in his hand. Half crawling, half sliding, over ridge and furrow, ditch and hedge, somewhat like Satan floundering over chaos, the

unhappy minister travelled, with all possible speed, as nearly as he could guess in the direction of the place of refuge. I leave it to the reader to conceive the surprise, the mirth, the infinite amusement of the smith and all the hangers-on of the "smiddy," when, at length, torn and worn, faint and exhausted, blind and breathless, the unfortunate man arrived at the place, and let them know (rather by signs than by words) the circumstances of his case. In the words of an old Scottish song,

Out cam the gudeman, and high he shouted ;
Out cam the gudewife, and low she louted ;
And a' the town-neighbours were gathered
about it ;

And there was he, I trow !

The merriment of the company, however, soon gave way to considerations of humanity. Ludicrous as was the minister, with such an object where his head should have been, and with the feet of the pot pointing upwards like the horns of the great Enemy, it was, nevertheless, necessary that he should be speedily restored to his ordinary condition, if it were for no

other reason than that he might continue to live. He was accordingly, at his own request, led into the smithy, multitudes flocking around to tender him their kindest offices, or to witness the process of his release ; and having laid down his head upon the anvil, the smith lost no time in seizing and poising his goodly forehammer.

"Will I come sair on, minister ?" exclaimed the considerate man of iron in at the brink of the pot.

"As sair as ye like," was the minister's answer ; "better a chap i' the chafts than dying for want of breath."

Thus permitted, the man let fall a hard blow, which fortunately broke the pot in pieces without hurting the head which it enclosed, as the cook-maid breaks the shell of the lobster without bruising the delicate food within. A few minutes of the clear air, and a glass from the gudewife's bottle, restored the unfortunate man of prayer ; but assuredly the incident is one which will long live in the memory of the parishioners.—*Edinburgh Literary Journal.*

THE SUTOR OF SELKIRK:

A REMARKABLY TRUE STORY.

BY ONE OF THE AUTHORS OF "THE ODD VOLUME."

ONCE upon a time, there lived in Selkirk a shoemaker, by name Rabbie Heckspeckle, who was celebrated both for dexterity in his trade, and for some other qualifications of a less profitable nature. Rabbie was a thin, meagre-looking personage, with lank black hair, a cadaverous countenance, and a long, flexible, secret-smelling nose. In short, he was the Paul Pry of the town. Not an old wife in the parish could buy a

new scarlet rokelay without Rabbie knowing within a groat of the cost ; the doctor could not dine with the minister but Rabbie could tell whether sheep's-head or haggis formed the staple commodity of the repast ; and it was even said that he was acquainted with the grunt of every sow, and the cackle of every individual hen, in his neighbourhood ; but this wants confirmation. His wife, Bridget, endeav-

oured to confine his excursive fancy, and to chain him down to his awl, reminding him it was *all* they had to depend on ; but her interference met with exactly that degree of attention which husbands usually bestow on the advice tendered by their better halves—that is to say, Rabbie informed her that she knew nothing of the matter, that her understanding required stretching, and finally, that if she presumed to meddle in his affairs, he would be under the disagreeable necessity of giving her a top-dressing.

To secure the necessary leisure for his researches, Rabbie was in the habit of rising to his work long before the dawn ; and he was one morning busily engaged putting the finishing stitches to a pair of shoes for the exciseman, when the door of his dwelling, which he thought was carefully fastened, was suddenly opened, and a tall figure, enveloped in a large black cloak, and with a broad-brimmed hat drawn over his brows, stalked into the shop. Rabbie stared at his visitor, wondering what could have occasioned this early call, and wondering still more that a stranger should have arrived in the town without his knowledge.

" You're early afoot, sir," quoth Rabbie. " Lucky Wakerife's cock will no craw for a good half hour yet."

The stranger vouchsafed no reply ; but taking up one of the shoes Rabbie had just finished, deliberately put it on, and took a turn through the room to ascertain that it did not pinch his extremities. During these operations, Rabbie kept a watchful eye on his customer.

" He smells awfully o' yird," muttered Rabbie to himself ; " ane would be ready to swear he had just cam frae the plough-tail."

The stranger, who appeared to be satisfied with the effect of the experiment, motioned to Rabbie for the other shoe, and pulled out a purse for the

purpose of paying for his purchase ; but Rabbie's surprise may be conceived, when, on looking at the purse, he perceived it to be spotted with a kind of earthy mould.

" Gudesake," thought Rabbie, " this queer man maun hae howkit that purse out o' the ground. I wonder where he got it. Some folk say there are dags o' siller buried near this town."

By this time the stranger had opened the purse, and as he did so, a toad and a beetle fell on the ground, and a large worm crawling out wound itself round his finger. Rabbie's eyes widened ; but the stranger, with an air of nonchalance, tendered him a piece of gold, and made signs for the other shoe.

" It's a thing morally impossible," responded Rabbie to this mute proposal. " Mair by token, that I hae as good as sworn to the exciseman to hae them ready by daylight, which will no be long o' coming" (the stranger here looked anxiously towards the window) ; " and better, I tell you, to affront the king himsel, than the exciseman."

The stranger gave a loud stamp with his shod foot, but Rabbie stuck to his point, offering, however, to have a pair ready for his new customer in twenty-four hours ; and, as the stranger, justly enough perhaps, reasoned that half a pair of shoes was of as little use as half a pair of scissors, he found himself obliged to come to terms, and seating himself on Rabbie's three-legged stool, held out his leg to the Sutor, who, kneeling down, took the foot of his taciturn customer on his knee, and proceeded to measure it.

" Something o' the splay, I think, sir," said Rabbie, with a knowing air.

No answer.

" Where will I bring the shoon to when they're done ? " asked Rabbie, anxious to find out the domicile of his visitor.

" I will call for them myself before

cock crowing," responded the stranger in a very uncommon and indescribable tone of voice.

"Hout, sir," quoth Rabbie, "I canna let you hae the trouble o' coming for them yourself; it will just be a pleasure for me to call with them at your house."

"I have my doubts of that," replied the stranger, in the same peculiar manner; "and at all events, my house would not hold us both."

"It maun be a dooms sma' biggin," answered Rabbie; "but noo that I hae ta'en your honour's measure—"

"Take your own!" retorted the stranger, and giving Rabbie a touch with his foot that laid him prostrate, walked coolly out of the house.

This sudden overturn of himself and his plans for a few moments discomfited the Sutor; but quickly gathering up his legs, he rushed to the door, which he reached just as Lucky Wakerife's cock proclaimed the dawn. Rabbie flew down the street, but all was still; then ran up the street, which was terminated by the churchyard, but saw only the moveless tombs looking cold and chill under the grey light of a winter morn. Rabbie hitched his red nightcap off his brow, and scratched his head with an air of perplexity.

"Weel," he muttered, as he retraced his steps homewards, "he has warred me this time, but sorrow take me if I'm no up wi' him the morn."

All day Rabbie, to the inexpressible surprise of his wife, remained as constantly on his three-legged stool as if he had been "yirked" there by some brother of the craft. For the space of twenty-four hours, his long nose was never seen to throw its shadow across the threshold of the door; and so extraordinary did this event appear, that the neighbours, one and all, agreed that it predicted some prodigy; but whether it was to take the shape of a comet, which would deluge them all with its fiery tail, or whether they were to be swallowed

up by an earthquake, could by no means be settled to the satisfaction of the parties concerned.

Meanwhile, Rabbie diligently pursued his employment, unheeding the concerns of his neighbours. What mattered it to him, that Jenny Thrifty's cow had calved, that the minister's servant, with something in her apron, had been seen to go in twice to Lucky Wakerife's, that the laird's dairy-maid had been observed stealing up the red loan in the gloaming, that the drum had gone through the town announcing that a sheep was to be killed on Friday?—The stranger alone swam before his eyes; and cow, dairy-maid, and drum kicked the beam. It was late in the night when Rabbie had accomplished his task, and then placing the shoes at his bedside, he lay down in his clothes, and fell asleep; but the fear of not being sufficiently alert for his new customer, induced him to rise a considerable time before daybreak. He opened the door and looked into the street, but it was still so dark he could scarcely see a yard before his nose; he therefore returned into the house, muttering to himself—"What the sorrow can keep him?" when a voice at his elbow suddenly said—

"Where are my shoes?"

"Here, sir," said Rabbie, quite transported with joy; "here they are, right and tight, and mickle joy may ye hae in wearing them, for it's better to wear shoon than sheets, as the auld saying gangs."

"Perhaps I may wear both," answered the stranger.

"Gude save us," quoth Rabbie, "do ye sleep in your shoon?"

The stranger made no answer; but, laying a piece of gold on the table and taking up the shoes, walked out of the house.

"Now's my time," thought Rabbie to himself, as he slipped after him.

The stranger paced slowly on, and Rabbie carefully followed him; the

stranger turned up the street, and the Sutor kept close to his heels. " 'Odsake, where can he be gaun?'" thought Rabbie, as he saw the stranger turn into the churchyard; " he's making to that grave in the corner; now he's standing still; now he's sitting down. Gudesake! what's come o' him?" Rabbie rubbed his eyes, looked round in all directions, but, lo and behold! the stranger had vanished. " There's something no canny about this," thought the Sutor; " but I'll mark the place at ony rate;" and Rabbie, after thrusting his awl into the grave, hastily returned home.

The news soon spread from house to house, and by the time the red-faced sun stared down on the town, the whole inhabitants were in commotion; and, after having held sundry consultations, it was resolved, *nem. con.*, to proceed in a body to the churchyard, and open the grave which was suspected of being suspicious. The whole population of the Kirk Wynd turned out on this service. Sutors, wives, children, all hurried pell-mell after Rabbie, who led his myrmidons straight to the grave at which his mysterious customer had disappeared, and where he found his awl still sticking in the place where he had left it. Immediately all hands went to work; the grave was opened; the lid was forced off the coffin; and a corpse was discovered dressed in the vestments of the tomb, but with a pair of perfectly new shoes upon its long bony feet. At this dreadful sight the multitude fled in every direction, Lucky Wakerife leading the van, leaving Rabbie and a few bold brothers of the craft to arrange matters as they pleased with the peripatetic skeleton. A council was held, and it was agreed that the coffin should be firmly nailed up and committed to the earth. Before doing so, however, Rabbie proposed denuding his customer of his shoes, remarking that he had no more need for them than a cart had for

three wheels. No objections were made to this proposal, and Rabbie, therefore, quickly coming to extremities, whipped them off in a trice. They then drove half a hundred tenpenny nails into the lid of the coffin, and having taken care to cover the grave with pretty thick divots, the party returned to their separate places of abode.

Certain qualms of conscience, however, now arose in Rabbie's mind as to the propriety of depriving the corpse of what had been honestly bought and paid for. He could not help allowing, that if the ghost were troubled with cold feet, a circumstance by no means improbable, he might naturally wish to remedy the evil. But, at the same time, considering that the fact of his having made a pair of shoes for a defunct man would be an everlasting blot on the Heckspeckle escutcheon, and reflecting also that his customer, being dead in law, could not apply to any court for redress, our Sutor manfully resolved to abide by the consequences of his deed.

Next morning, according to custom, he rose long before day, and fell to his work, shouting the old song of the "Sutors of Selkirk" at the very top of his voice. A short time, however, before the dawn, his wife, who was in bed in the back room, remarked, that in the very middle of his favourite verse, his voice fell into a quaver; then broke out into a yell of terror; and then she heard a noise, as of persons struggling; and then all was quiet as the grave. The good dame immediately huddled on her clothes, and ran into the shop, where she found the three-legged stool broken in pieces, the floor strewed with bristles, the door wide open, and Rabbie away! Bridget rushed to the door, and there she immediately discovered the marks of footsteps deeply printed on the ground. Anxiously tracing them, on—and on—and on—what was her horror to find that they

terminated in the churchyard, at the grave of Rabbie's customer! The earth round the grave bore traces of having been the scene of some fearful struggle, and several locks of lank black hair were scattered on the grass. Half distracted, she rushed through the town to communicate the dreadful intelligence. A crowd collected, and a cry speedily arose to open the grave. Spades, pickaxes, and mattocks, were quickly

put in requisition; the divots were removed; the lid of the coffin was once more torn off, and there lay its ghastly tenant, with his shoes replaced on his feet, and Rabbie's red night-cap clutched in his right hand!

The people, in consternation, fled from the churchyard; and nothing further has ever transpired to throw any additional light upon the melancholy fate of the Sutor of Selkirk.

ELSIE MORRICE.

FROM THE "ABERDEEN CENSOR."

Oh, wert thou of the golden-wingèd host,
Who, having clad thyself in human weed,
To earth, from thy prefixèd seat didst post,
And, after short abode, fly back with speed,
As if to show what creatures Heav'n doth breed,
Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire,
To scorn the sordid world, and unto Heav'n aspire?—*Milton.*

IN the neighbourhood of the pleasant village of _____, on the east coast of Scotland, lived Janet Morrice and her grand-daughter Elsie. A small cottage, overlaid with woodbine on the exterior, and neat and clean in the interior, contained this couple; and a small farm attached to it served to supply all their humble desires. The place was no doubt agreeable to look on; but it was a pair of bright blue eyes, some light brown locks, and a sweet and modest face, that drew all the male visitors to the house of Janet Morrice. Elsie Morrice, her grandchild, had been left a young orphan to her charge. She was the only child of an only son, and thus came with a double call on the feelings of her old grandmother. Dearly was she loved by her, and well did she deserve it; for a better and a kindlier girl was not in all the country round. Out of the many young men that paid their attentions to Elsie, it was soon

evident that her favourite was William Gordon. In his person he had nothing particular to recommend him above his companions; but there was in him that respectful demeanour, that eagerness to please, and that happiness in serving the object of his affections, which the eyes of a young woman can so soon perceive, and her heart so readily appreciate. In their dispositions, though not similar, they were drawn to each other. She was timid, loving, enthusiastic—in every respect a woman. He was gifted with those firmer qualities which bespeak a manly mind, but he had a heart that could love deeply and feel acutely;

And, if sometimes, a sigh should intervene,
Or down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
A sigh, a tear so sweet, he wished not to control.

There was also some resemblance in their situations; for William's mother

was dead, and though he still had a father, yet this parent had never seen him, and took no concern about him ; so that he was entirely dependent upon his maternal uncle. To his uncle's farm he was to succeed ; and William Gordon and Elsie Morrice were considered by all the neighbours as soon to be man and wife.

William was seated one evening in the public-house of the village, reading the newspaper, when a party of sailors entered, and, calling for some drink, casually asked if there were any seamen in the village. The landlady civilly replied in the negative ; but William, looking up, remarked, without noticing the winks of the landlord, that he had seen Tom Sangster arrive that morning.

"And where lives Tom Sangster, my hearty cock ?" said the principal of the party, slapping him on the back, while the rest got betwixt the landlady and the door. He immediately informed them ; and, drinking off their liquor quickly, they left the house.

"Willie," cried the landlady, "what hae ye done ? It's the press-gang, and Tam Sangster 'll be torn frae his wife and bairns !"

In a moment William was past her, and, running with full speed, by a nearer cut, he arrived before the gang at the house. He had just time to make the seaman strip his jacket, and put on his coat, and jump out at the back window, when the gang entered. William, without turning round, knocked out the lamp, when a struggle ensued, which he contrived to keep up so long as that Tom Sangster might be out of the way. He was at last overpowered and carried aboard the tender, when they discovered they had lost the regular sailor ; but the one they had got was too likely a young man to be suffered to depart. The consciousness of having remedied an error he had committed, even though in ignorance, partly consoled William for parting with his beloved Elsie for a

little. It was at the time when the news of the glorious victory of the Nile had arrived, and many a young and aspiring bosom burned to be under the command of so gallant an admiral. William's father belonged to the navy ; he knew that he fought under Nelson ; and the thought that he might be able to combat by his side, and under the eye of the hero who was his country's boast, somewhat palliated the idea of leaving his love. Besides, he would soon return laden with honours and riches, and Elsie would share both.

Auspicious hope ! in thy sweet garden grow
Wreaths for each toil, a charm for every
woe.

And thus he consoled himself with a flattering vision in circumstances that he could not alter. As for poor Elsie, her timid mind had never contemplated bloodshed and war. She loved, fervently loved, and her life had been one scene of pleasure. She was a dreamer that all the night long had quaffed the brimful cup of happiness, and in the morning waked to wretchedness. To lamentations, however, succeeded some consultation for a remedy ; and she was advised, by her sorrowing neighbours, to apply to the laird for his interest. Loose, unprincipled, and broken down in fortune, he had returned, from the fashionable life he could no longer support, to live on his estate ; and he was not beloved by his tenants. But when a woman loves, and the object of her affection is in danger, where is the obstacle that can oppose her ? Elsie exerted herself to call on him.

The poet has beautifully said,

Ah, too convincing, dangerously dear,
In woman's eye th' unanswerable tear,
The weapon of her weakness she can wield
To save, subdue—at once her spear and shield.

But there are some men that can look on woman's grief, and yet coolly calculate on turning it to their own purposes ; and so it was in the present case. Elsie

Morrice was lovely, and that was enough for him. He promised everything, and her heart overflowed with gratitude. He not only promised this, but he requested her grandmother's lease, to draw it out anew in her name. Elsie ran home, and, in a few minutes, without consulting her grandmother, the lease was in his hands : for who could doubt the intentions of him who had pledged his word that William Gordon should be put ashore? This was no sooner done, than came the sneer at her lover, the information that his Majesty's navy must be manned, the hint at the injury to the landlord in old leases, and the proposal of the remedy that was to remove all these evils. The colour fled from Elsie's face. She stood the picture of complete despair, and, for a little time, reason had to dispute for her sovereignty in her mind. She rushed from his presence, and, in her way back to Sunnybrae, saw, without shedding one tear, the vessel that contained her lover spread her broad sails to the wind and depart. Janet Morrice reproached her not when she told her what she had done, but, taking her in her arms, said, "Come, my Elsie, we maunna bide to be putten out. I've sitten here, and my fathers afore me, an' I'm wae to leave it ; but age and innocence will find a shelter somewhere else." Next day they removed to a cottage on a neighbouring estate. A verbal message was all that William could send her ; but it was the assurance he would be soon back to her. Elsie seemed now to live in another state of existence. She toiled in the fields, and seemed anxious to make up to her grandmother the effects of her imprudence. Time passed on, and no letter arrived from William, and Elsie grew sorrowful and melancholy. Grief and labour bore down a constitution naturally delicate, and she drooped.

There is something to my mind particularly holy and heavenly in the death-bed of a lovely woman. When I

look on the pale cheek, which now and then regains more than its former colour in some feverish flush—on the sunk eye which occasionally beams with a short and transient hope—on the pale lips which utter low sounds of comfort to those around—and, more especially, on that whole countenance and appearance which bespeak patient resignation and a trust in that Word which has said there is another and a better world—I cannot help thinking that the being, even in her mortality, is already a deserving inmate of that place where all is immortality. I have stood at the grave while some of my earliest friends have been lowered into the ground, and I have wept to think that the bright hopes of youth were for ever fled—that the fair promises of youthful genius were wrapt within the clay-cold tomb—and that all the anticipations of the world's applause had ended in the one formal bow of a few friends over mouldering ashes ; but I confess I have sorrowed more at the grave of a young and lovely woman who had nothing to excite my compassion but her beauty and her helplessness ; and often have the lines of that poet, who could be pathetic as well as sublime, come to my lips,—

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
Or that thy corpse corrupts in earth's dark
womb,
Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
Hid from the world in a low-delvèd tomb.

It was on a lovely morning in the month of May that a sad and sorrowful company assembled to accompany the remains of poor Elsie Morrice to her last cold dwelling-place. According to that old-fashioned and most becoming custom, she was borne on the bier, and carried, as is the practice in that part of the country, for some way by the young maidens dressed in white. No mother had she to weep for her, no relation to bear her head to the grave ; but her old grandmother followed her corpse to the door—farther she could not ; and, when

it was placed on the bier, she attempted not to speak or to moan, but she leaned her palsied hands on her staff, and followed the coffin with her eyes, while down her furrowed cheeks rolled two big tears that told too well her inward grief. Elsie's young companion, May Leslie, who was to have been her best-maid at the marriage, who had promised to assist at her marriage dress, and make her marriage bed, had, in sorrow and in grief, fashioned that last dress in which beauty is offered, not to the arms of a lover, but to the crawling worm, now supported her head for a few steps to that bed from which there is no rising till the last dread trumpet shall sound. The females then gave the corpse to the young men, and I could perceive, as they returned, that many a handkerchief was soaked in briny tears, and many a head turned to take a last look at the departure of her who had been their companion and their pride. We moved on, and, after an hour's walking, arrived at the old churchyard of —. It is situated on the front of a bleak and barren hill, with neither tree nor shrub for some way around it ; and a few moss-covered tombstones alone told us that it was the resting place for the dead. The church had been rebuilt in a more convenient place ; but, like the sojourner in distant lands, who sighs for his native soil, however barren, there are some that still cling to the spot which is the grave of their fathers. Though it may betray some weakness in reason, still I hope it is an excusable failing, in feeling minds, that they desire to mingle in their ashes with their friends. Here we deposited the remains of Elsie Morrice, and, when the grave had been closed over, the company departed in groups, chiefly engaged in talking over her unfortunate love.

The heather sods had long become fast, and the hare-bell had blossomed and withered for some summers on the grave of Elsie Morrice, when one day

a seaman, singing a merry sea-song to himself, tript up the pathway leading to Sunnybrae. It was William Gordon. The joy he had felt on again entering amongst scenes so well known to him, sent itself forth in a song ; but, as he approached the house, it died away, and gave place to far different feelings. He had never heard from Elsie ; but, while aboard of ship, he had hushed any fears that arose, by ascribing this to the letters miscarrying from the ever changing station of a sailor. Still he was not well at ease ; and as he came in front of the house, and saw the woodbine torn from the walls, the windows here and there broken and covered with paper, and the pretty flower-garden of Elsie turned into a kail-yard, the most fearful forebodings arose in his breast, and with a trembling and hurried hand he lifted the latch. He started back on perceiving some children playing on the floor, but again advanced when he saw a middle-aged woman nursing a child, and asked, in the best way he was able, if she could tell him where Janet Morrice lived ? She gave him a direction, and, without taking one other look at the cottage he had so often visited, he made his way to the new dwelling, and on entering, addressed her in the usual salutation, " How are you, Granny, and how is Elsie ? "

The old woman was seated with her face to the hearth, and perceived not his entrance ; but on hearing his voice, without starting or moving, she immediately answered, " An' ye're come back, Willie Gordon ; an' sae ye're come back ! I kent a' this. I kent, when the house and the ha' o' the stranger would be closed against ye, ye would come back to your ain country. I saw her yestreen, as I hae seen her ilka night, and she tauld me ye would come. But this fire's out," continued she, stirring about the embers with her stick ; " I tried to blaw that peat, but I wasna able to raise the low : an' when she comes and seats her-

sel on that stool, it 'ill be sae cauld, an' she winna complain o't, but her bonny face 'ill be sae wan, and her braw white gown 'ill be sae damp and dewy. Ye'll see her, Willie, ye'll see her wi' the bonny new mutch on that May Leslie made wi' her ain hand. An' I'll shiver and tremble in my cauld bed, and she winna lie down wi' me, but she'll sit by the fire an' aye deck hersel wi' the black kerchief that Willie Gordon tied roun' her neck lang afore he gaed awa."

William, who had stood riveted to the earth all this time, now exerted himself, and, seizing her arm, asked loudly, "Where is Elsie Morrice?"

"Whaur is Elsie Morrice?—and wha speirs that question? They took her awa frae me lang ago, dressed in white, like a bride, and mony aye gaed wi' her, but I wasna able, though they dressed me fine in my braw Sunday-claithes."

"Granny, ye knew me already," said he; "for God's sake, tell me what has become of Elsie?"

"There were twa bonny voices ca'd me granny, and I liket to hear them; but the little feathered flock picks the craw-berries, an' the bee sooks the honey frae the heather on the grave o' the aye, and the ither is a faithless love, and broke the heart o' the leal young bairn that lay in my bosom."

William now knew the worst. He threw himself in agony on the dais, and wept and cursed his hard lot. Elsie Morrice was dead, and dead, as appeared, through his neglect. When his grief had found some vent, he again asked the old woman if they had received no letters from him?

She raised her shaking hand, and tracing every feature of his face, said, "Though I canna see sae weel that face, I ken ye're Willie Gordon; but oh, Willie, Willie, ye hae come when the flame ye should hae nourished has been quenched. We never got ony letters, or else Elsie would hae tried to live."

It was with great exertion that he

was able to gather from her disjointed sentences, that the laird had turned them out of Sunnybrae, and continued to annoy them, and that Elsie had broken her heart when he left them and sent no letters. Many a kind letter had William written, but they were directed, for security's sake, to the care of the laird, and the mystery of his never receiving any answer was now cleared away. "But the laird shall answer for this!" said he, stepping to the door. "Na, Willie Gordon," said she, taking hold of him, "he manna answer for't to you. There is Anither that will judge him for abusing the widow and the orphan. Ay, he is already cursed for it," continued she, stretching out her lean and shrivelled arm, and raising herself like a Sibyl; "his lang list of ancestors is at end in him. He walks the world the last of his proud race. A few years, and yon lordly house will be the dwalling o' the hoodie-craw and the rook; an' the present proud man will be lying in his leaden coffin, wi' the worms o' his ain body devouring him, and the winds o' heaven will dash his lie-telling tombstone to pieces, an' the beasts will tread on his grave, an' the rains level it, an' none will repair it, for his name shall be forgotten for ever. But whisht, Willie, I canna greet wi' you. Ye'll see her, when the hen has been lang on the roost, an' the tod has left his hole to worry the puir beastie, an' we'll get May Leslie, an' we'll hae a blazing fire, an' we'll be merry again in Sunnybrae."

A shrill and unearthly laugh followed, and she sank again into her former querulous muttering.

William suddenly left the house and was never more seen; but some weeks after, the grave of Elsie Morrice was found finely dressed, and a stone, with her name and age carved on it by the hand of no regular sculptor, at the head of it. And every spring the greedy moss was found cleaned away from the stone, and the grave trimmed. While

Janet Morrice lived, her garden was delved, and money deposited on her table, by the same invisible hand. No one knew what became of William Gordon ; but occasionally, in the gray of a May morning, as the shepherd was merrily driving his flocks with the sun to the pasture, he saw the dark figure of a man chiselling at the stone, or stretched on the grave of Elsie Morrice. About three years ago a shepherd's dog, one day, prowling about the old churchyard, returned, and, by his howling, urged his master to the spot, where he found the dead body of a seaman. The letters W. G. and an anchor on his forearm, and

W. S. and E. M., with a heart between them, and the Saviour on the cross above, on his left breast, done with Chinaink or gunpowder, after that fashion which sailors have in order that their bodies may be known, if picked up after shipwreck, told too well who had chosen this place for his death-bed. Sufficient money was found on him to pay the expenses of his burial, and he was laid in the grave he had died upon. Last summer I visited the spot. The grave was running into wildness ; but, in a state of mind pleasing yet sad, I spent half a day in dressing the resting-place of this unfortunate pair.

HOW I WON THE LAIRD'S DAUGHTER.

BY DANIEL GORRIE.

CHAPTER I.

SOON after I had obtained my diploma, and was dubbed M.D., an opening for a medical practitioner occurred in the pleasant village of St Dunstan, situated on the beautiful banks of the Tweed. Knowing well that I might be forestalled by a day's delay, I bundled up my testimonials and letters of recommendation, and departed at once for the scene of action. The shadows of a calm October evening were drooping over the Eildon Hills, and the Tweed was murmuring peacefully along its winding course, when I entered the principal street of the village, and took up my quarters at the inn. After refreshing myself with such entertainment as the house afforded, I called in the landlord, told him the object of my visit, and inquired if any other medical gentlemen had yet made their appearance. Mine host was a

canny, cautious Scotsman, and manifested due deliberation in a matter of so much moment. He surveyed me quietly for a short time, and did not reply until he seemed satisfied with his scrutiny.

"Na, sir," he said at length ; "ye're the first that's come to the toun yet, and a' the folk are wearying for anither doctor. Ye see, we canna tell what may happen. The shoemaker's wife took unco onweel last nicht, and, frail as he is himsel, puir man, he had to gang a' the way to Melrose for medical advice. Ye look young like, sir ; hae ye been in ony place afore?"

"No," I replied ; "it is not very long since I passed."

"Ay, weel, that's no sae gude ; we rather like a skeely man here. Dr Sommerville had a great deal o' experience, and we were a' sorry when he left for Glasgow."

"I am glad that the good people of St Dunstan liked their last doctor so well," I rejoined, somewhat nettled at the plain-spokenness of the worthy landlord of the Cross-Keys. "But although my youth may be against me," I continued, "here are some testimonials which I hope may prove satisfactory, and I have several letters of recommendation besides to gentlemen in the village and neighbourhood."

The landlord was a person whom I saw that it was necessary to gain over. He was vastly pleased when I recognised his importance by producing my testimonials for his inspection. It was amusing to observe the gravity and dignity with which he adjusted his spectacles across the bridge of his nose, and proceeded to carefully inspect the documents. At intervals as he read he gave such running comments as "gude—" "very gude"—"excellent"—"capital sir, capital!" I was glad to see the barometer rising so rapidly. After mine host had finished the perusal of the papers, he shook me heartily by the hand, and said, "You're the very man we want, sir; ye hae first-rate certificates."

So far, so good. It was a great thing to have gained the confidence and goodwill of one important personage, and I felt desirous to make further conquests that evening.

"Do you think I might venture to call to-night upon any of the parties in the village to whom I have letters of recommendation?" I inquired.

"Surely, surely," responded the landlord; "the sooner the better. Just read me ower their names, sir, and I'll tak ye round to their houses. We hae a better chance o' gettin' them in at nicht than through the day."

Accompanied by the lord of the Cross-Keys, I accordingly visited the leading inhabitants of the village, and made what an expectant member of Parliament would consider a very satis-

factory canvass. I was received with much courtesy and civility; and the minister of the parish, to whom I had a letter of introduction from a brother clergyman in Edinburgh, paid me the most flattering attentions, and pressed me to take up my abode immediately at St Dunstan. The ladies, married and unmarried, with whom I entered into conversation, were all unanimous in expressing their desire that I should remain in their midst. Indeed, I have observed that the female sex invariably take the greatest interest in the settlement of ministers and doctors. I could easily understand why the unmarried ladies should prefer a single gentleman like myself; but I could not comprehend at the time why their mothers seemed to take so much interest in a newly-fledged M.D. It struck me that the landlord of the inn must have committed a great mistake in describing Dr Sommerville as the favourite of all classes.

From many of the people upon whom we called I received kind invitations to spend the night in their houses, and I could have slept in a dozen different beds if I had felt so inclined; but I preferred returning to the Cross-Keys, that, like the Apostle, I might be burdensome to none. It is a piece of worldly prudence to give as little trouble as possible to strangers; and medical practitioners, of all men in the world, require to be wary in their ways, and circumspect in their actions.

On our return to the inn, the landlord appeared to regard my settlement in St Dunstan as a certainty.

"Ye've got on grandly the nicht, Dr Wilson," he said, dropping the "sir" when he considered me almost installed in office. "Ye've carried everything afore ye—I never saw the like o't. Ye hae got the promise o' practice frae the hale lot o' them—that's to say, when they need the attendance o' a medical man; and, 'od,

doctor, but the womenkind are aften complainin'."

"Well, Mr Barlas," I said (such was the landlord's name), "I have experienced much kindness and civility, and in the course of a few hours I have far outstripped my expectations. If I only succeed as well with the ladies and gentlemen in the neighbourhood, I will not hesitate for a moment in settling down in the midst of you."

"There's nae danger o' that, doctor. What's sauce or senna for the goose is sauce or senna for the gander. I've seen aften eneuch that the grit folk are no sae ill to please as the sma'. If ye get ower the Laird,—an' I think ye've as gude a chance as ony ither body,—ye needna fear muckle for the rest."

"And who is the Laird, Mr Barlas?" I asked.

"Oh, just the Laird, ye ken—Laird Ramsay o' the Haugh; ye'll surely hae heard o' him afore you cam south?"

"Ramsay," I said; "Ramsay—oh, yes,—I have a letter of introduction to a gentleman of that name from a professor in Edinburgh. Does he rule the roast in this neighbourhood?"

"I'll tell you aboot him i' the noo; but wait a wee, doctor, till I bring ye something warm."

I did not disapprove of the medicine proposed by the host of the Cross-Keys of St Dunstan, as I was anxious to know as much as possible about the place and people; and the influence of hot punch in making even silent persons communicative is quite proverbial. Mr Barlas, after a brief absence, returned to the snug little parlour, bearing his own private blue bottle, capable, I should think, of holding a good half-gallon of Islay or Glenlivet; and we were soon sitting comfortably, with steaming tumblers before us, beside a blazing fire.

"This is something social like, noo, doctor," said the composed and considerate landlord. "Ye were wantin' to

hear aboot the Laird. Weel, I'll tell ye what sort o' a being he is, that ye may be on your guard when ye gang to the Haugh the morn. Laird Ramsay has mair gear, doctor, than ony half-dozen o' his neighbours for mony miles roond, and he's a queer character wi'd a'. He's unco auld-fashioned for a man in his station, an' speaks muckle sic like as ye hear me speakin' i' the noo. He gets the name o' haudin' a gude grip o' his siller; but I've nae reason to compleen, as he spends freely eneuch when he comes to the Cross-Keys, no forgettin' the servant-lass and the ostler; an' I ken for a fac' that he slips a canny shillin' noo and again into the loofs o' the puir folk o' St Dunstan. He's unco douce and proud,—ye might maist say saucy,—until ye get the richt side o' him, an' then he's the best o' freends; an' nane better than the Laird at a twa-handed crack."

"And how do you get to the right side of him, Mr Barlas?" I interjected.

"That's the very thing I was gaun to tell ye, doctor. Lay on the butter weel. Butter him on baith sides, an' then ye easy get to the richt side. Praise his land, his craps, his nowte, his house, his garden, his Glenlivet, his everything; but tak care what ye say o' his dochter to his face."

"The Laird has got a daughter, then, it seems?"

"Ay, that he has, an' a comely quean she is; but he'll be a clever man wha can rin awa wi' her frae the Haugh. The Laird just dotes upon her, an' he wouldna pairt wi' her for love or siller. If she has a sweetheart, I'm thinkin' he'll need to sook his thoomb, an' bide a wee."

In answer to my inquiries the landlord informed me that Miss Jessie Ramsay was the Laird's only daughter, and that her mother had been dead for several years. His information and anecdotes regarding the eccentric char-

acter of the old-fashioned proprietor of the Haugh, excited my curiosity so much that I resolved to pay him an early visit on the following day. After sitting for an hour or two, during which time Mr Barlas became more and more loquacious, I seized the first favourable opportunity to propose an adjournment, and receiving the reluctant assent of mine host, I retired to rest, and slept soundly in spite of all the crowing cocks of St Dunstan.

In the morning the tidings were through the whole village that a new doctor had come, and several people became suddenly unwell, for the express purpose, I presume, of testing my skill. Three urgent cases I found to be ordinary headache, and, fearing lest my trip to the Haugh might be delayed for two weeks, I hired the best hack the Cross-Keys could afford, and made off for the domicile of the eccentric Laird. The owner of the hack was very anxious to accompany me, but I preferred making the excursion alone. The weather was mild and delightful ; the trees seemed lovelier in decay than in the fulness of summer life ; and the Tweed flowed and murmured softly as the waters of Siloah. Half-an-hour's riding brought me to the Haugh—an ancient edifice embosomed among trees. In the prime of its youth it would doubtless be considered a splendid mansion ; but in its old age it had an ungainly appearance, although not altogether destitute of a certain picturesque air. After disposing of my hack to a little Jack-of-all-work urchin, who was looking about for some work to do, or meditating mischief, I knocked at the door, and was ushered, by an old serving-woman, into a quaint apartment, crammed with antique furniture. The mantelpiece absolutely groaned under its load of ornaments, while a great spreading plume of peacock's feathers waved triumphantly over all. This must be the Laird's fancy, I

thought, and not the taste of Miss Jessie. Several pictures illustrative of fox-hunting, and two portraits, adorned the walls. None of them could be considered as belonging to any particular school, or as masterpieces in art. On the window-blinds a besieging force was represented as assaulting a not very formidable castle.

While I sat amusing myself with the oddities of the apartment, the door opened, and the Laird entered. He was a gray-haired, ruddy-faced, shrewd-looking man of fifty or thereabouts. I was rather taken with his dress. He wore a blue coat of antique cut, knee breeches, long brown gaiters with metal buttons, and his vest was beautified with perpendicular yellow stripes. There was an air of dignity about him when he entered as though he were conscious that he was Laird of the Haugh, and that I had come to consult him about some important business. Being a Justice of the Peace, as I afterwards learned, he probably wished to impress a stranger with a sense of his official greatness. I did not know very well whether to address him as Mr Ramsay or the "Laird;" but he relieved me of the difficulty by saying in broad Scotch, "This is a grand day, sir ; hae ye ridden far?"

"No," I replied, "only from St Dunstan."

"Just that—just that," said the Laird, with a peculiar tone. "I thocht as much when I met the callant leadin' awa the Cross-Key's charger,—puir beast!"

I handed the Laird the letter of introduction which I had received from one of the medical professors in Edinburgh. He read it very slowly, as though he were spelling and weighing every word, and he had perused it twice from beginning to end before he rose and welcomed me to the Haugh.

"He's a clever man, that professor," quoth Laird Ramsay ; "an' he speaks

o' ye, doctor, in a flattering way ; but the proof o' the puddin' is the preein' o't, ye ken. Ye've shown some spunk in comin' sae quick to St Dunstan ; but ye're young eneuch to be on your ain coat-tail yet."

"We must begin somewhere and sometime, Mr Ramsay," I rejoined.

"Ye're richt there," answered the Laird ; and then added with a chuckle, "but patients dinna like to be made victims o'. However, we'll think aboot that. Ye'll be nane the worse o' something to eat and drink, I'm thinkin' ; an' to tell the truth, I want to weet my ain whistle."

So saying, the Laird o' the Haugh rose and rang the bell, and told the old serving-woman, the handmaiden of the household, to bid Jessie speak to him. In a short time Jessie, a tall, handsome, hearty, fresh-coloured, black-haired beauty, came tripping into the room. The Laird was not very ceremonious so far as the matter of introduction was concerned, but Jessie was one of those frank girls who can introduce themselves, and make you feel perfectly at home at once. The father and daughter were evidently strongly attached to each other.

"Bring us some wine first, like a gude lass," said the Laird, "an' then we'll tak something mair substantial when ye're ready."

Jessie, like a dutiful daughter, placed the decanters and glasses on the table. There was an elasticity in her step, a grace in her every motion, and an irresistible charm in her frank and affectionate smile. The Laird did not seem altogether to relish the manner in

which my eyes involuntarily followed her movements ; and remembering what mine host of the Cross-Keys had told me on the previous night, I resolved to be as circumspect as possible, both in look and word. The Laird o' the Haugh pledged the young doctor, and the young doctor pledged the Laird. Meanwhile, Jessie had disappeared to look after the substantials. A glass or two of his capital wine warmed Laird Ramsay into a fine conversational mood, and we got on famously together. After dinner, when the punch was produced, our intimacy increased, and I began to love the eccentric Laird for the sake of his beautiful and accomplished daughter. I discovered that he had a hearty relish for humorous stories and anecdotes, and I plied him with them in thick succession, until the fountain of laughter ran over in tears. I was determined to take the old gentleman by storm, and Miss Jessie, with quick feminine instinct, appeared to be more than half aware of my object. However, I carefully abstained from exciting his suspicion by conversing directly with Jessie, even when he appeared to be in the most genial and pleasant mood.

The evening was pretty far advanced when I left his hospitable board. "Mind, you're to be the doctor o' St Dunstan," he said, as I mounted the Cross-Key's charger. "We'll hae naebody but yoursel, an' ye mun be sure an' come back soon again to the Haugh." I rode home to mine inn fully resolved to locate myself in the village, and firmly persuaded that if I had not captivated the Laird's daughter, I had at least conquered the Laird himself.

CHAPTER II.

"Weel, doctor, is it a' richt wi' the Laird ?" inquired Mr Barlas when I returned to the Cross-Keys.

"Yes," I rejoined, "it's all right.

Laird Ramsay is now my warmest and staunchest supporter, and a most companionable old gentleman he is."

"I never heard the like o' that," said

the landlord, lifting up his eyebrows in astonishment. “ ‘Od, doctor, ye’re jist like that auld Roman reiver, Cæsar, wha gaed aboot seein’ and conquerin’. Ye hae a clear coast noo, when ye hae gotten the gudewill o’ the Laird and the minister. An’ what think ye o’ the dochter? Isna she a comely lass, Miss Ramsay?”

“ She is, indeed, Mr Barlas,” I replied. “ The young lady seems to do her best to make her father feel happy and comfortable, and I have no doubt that many ‘ braw wooers’ will frequently find their way to the Haugh.”

“ Na, doctor, na. As I tellt ye afore, the Laird is unco fond o’ Miss Jessie, an’ I dinna believe he would pairt wi’ her to the best man i’ the kintra-side. But ye hae sic an uncommon power o’ comin’ roond folk that I wouldna wonner to see ye tryin’ yersel.”

“ Stranger things have happened, Mr Barlas,” I rejoined. “ Meantime, my mind is made up to settle down in St Dunstan. I like the place and the people, the Eildon Hills, the Tweed, and Laird Ramsay.”

“ No to speak o’ his dochter,” interjected mine host with a knowing look.

“ But where,” I continued, “ am I to take up my quarters?”

“ Ye needna put yersel in a peck o’ troubles aboot that, doctor. There’s Dr Sommerville’s cottage just waitin’ for ye alang the road a bit. It’s a commodious hoose, wi’ trees roond it an’ a bonny garden at the back, slopin’ to the south. Dr Sommerville was fond o’ flowers, an’ I never saw a pleasanter place than it was in summer. But the fac’ is, ye’ll hae to tak it, doctor, because there’s no anither hoose to let in the hale toun.”

“ Such being the case, Mr Barlas, there is no choice, and the matter is settled.”

“ Just that—just that,” responded

the worthy landlord, and then added, with an eye to business, “ Ye can mak the Cross-Keys yer hame till ye get the cottage a’ painted an’ furnished to your mind.”

“ So be it, Mr Barlas; and now that the house is settled, what about a house-keeper? Was Dr Sommerville maried?”

“ Married? of course, he was married, an’ had lots o’ weans to the bargain. But just try yer hand wi’ Miss Ramsay. I would like grand to see ye at that game, doctor.”

“ Nonsense,” I rejoined. “ I do not want to steal the Laird’s ewe-lamb, and break with him at the very commencement of my course. Is there no quiet, decent, honest body about St Dunstan who would make a good and active housekeeper?”

“ They’re a’ honest an’ decent thegither, except it be twa or three o’ the canglin’ mugger folk wha mend auld pans and break anither’s heads. Let me see—stop a wee—ou, ay—I have ye noo, doctor; there’s Mrs Johnston—a clean, thrifty, tidy woman o’ forty or thereabouts; she’ll fit ye to a T, an’ keep yer hoose like a new leek. Her gudeman was an elder; but he took an inward trouble aboot a year syne, an’ a’ the skill o’ Doctor Sommerville couldna keep his life in when his time was come. I’ll speak to Mrs Johnston the morn, so ye can keep yer mind easy aboot a housekeeper.”

“ We’re getting on famously, Mr Barlas. The house and housekeeper are both disposed of. What next?”

“ What next, doctor? The next thing, I’m thinkin’, ill be a horse. Folk will be sendin’ for ye post-haste to gang sax or seven miles awa, an’ ye canna get on without a beast. Are ye onything skeely in horseflesh?”

“ No,” I replied, “ not particularly. I would require to purchase a horse by proxy.”

This reply appeared to give mine

host considerable satisfaction. After a brief pause he said, "Weel, doctor, what think ye o' the beastie that took ye to the Haugh the day? It's fine an' canny, an' free frae a' kind o' pranks. It would never fling ye aff an' break your banes when ye were gaun to mend ither folk's bodies. It'll no cost ye muckle siller, and ye'll get a capital bargain wi' the beast."

I could not help smiling when the landlord detailed the excellent qualities of the Rosinante of the Cross-Keys—the superb steed which excited the compassion of Laird Ramsay.

"It is an admirable animal, Mr Barlas," I replied, always careful to avoid giving offence; "but the truth is, there is a friend of mine in Edinburgh who is great in horses, and who would never forgive me if I did not permit him to make the selection and the purchase."

"Vera weel, doctor—vera well," rejoined the landlord, professing contentment, although apparently somewhat chagrined. "Ye may get a stronger and mair speerity beast; but, tak my word for't, ye'll no get ane to answer yer purpose better. It's an extraordinar' sensible animal, an' kens a' the roads aboot the kintra-side. In the darkest winter nicht ye might fling the bridle on its neck, and it would bring ye hame to St Dunstan safe an' soond. Ye can tak anither thocht about it, doctor, an' I mun awa an' gie the beast its supper."

A few weeks after the above confab with the sagacious landlord of the Cross-Keys, I was quietly domiciled in Oakbank Cottage, on the outskirts of St Dunstan, and had commenced the routine work of a medical practitioner. Mrs Johnston was duly installed as housekeeper; and a capital riding-horse, which Mr Barlas was compelled to allow "micht do," arrived from the metropolis. I liked my cottage very much. It stood apart from the public road, and was quiet and secluded. Rows

of poplar trees surrounded the green, and flower pots in front, and a tall beechen-hedge girdled on all sides the sloping garden in the rear. The high banks of the Tweed, adorned with many-tinted foliage, swept along close at hand, and the strong deep gush of that noble river was borne abroad on every swell of wind. Oakbank Cottage was, in my estimation, the sweetest residence in and around St Dunstan; and as I, like my predecessor, was fond of floriculture, I resolved to make the place look like a little paradise when the spring and summer months came round again. I was not long in getting into a good practice. There was not much opposition from other gentlemen in the district, and many miles I rode both by night and by day. It always vexed the heart of my worthy housekeeper, Mrs Johnston, when a special messenger called me away to a distance after nightfall, and there was no end to the instructions she gave me—M.D. though I was—about the best means of preventing sore throats and rheumatisms. Mrs Johnston had never listened to the learned prelections of medical professors at any of our universities; nevertheless, like many other sensible and sedate women, in her own sphere of life, she had managed to pick up no inconsiderable amount of sound medical knowledge.

I was soon on the best of terms with all the people of the village, for it will generally be found that while a clergyman has admirers and detractors among his own hearers, a doctor who is gifted with a modicum of amiability can easily make himself a favourite with all classes. Of course, when any person dies, the fiends of the deceased will not unfrequently declaim against the imperfection of the medical treatment; but grumblings such as these are natural and pardonable, and fail to shake the general esteem in which the practitioner is held. The minister of the parish was a frequent

visitor at Oakbank, and in order to strengthen our good fellowship, I became a member of his congregation. He was an upright and honest-hearted man, although somewhat too polemical for my taste. I used to think that he was in the habit of airing his argumentative speeches in my presence before he delivered himself of them at Presbytery meetings.

None of the people in the district seemed better satisfied than Laird Ramsay o' the Haugh that I had located myself in St Dunstan. He called one day at Oakbank, soon after my settlement, just as I was preparing to set out on a rural ride. The Laird was attired in the ordinary dress which he wore at the Haugh. The brown hat, the blue antique coat, the knee-breeches, the long gaiters, and the yellow-striped vest, seemed to form a part of his eccentric character.

"Gude day t'ye, Dr Wilson—gude day," said the Laird, as he shook me by the hand. "What way hae ye been sae lang in comin' ower my way? I'm wearyin' sair to get another firlot o' yon queer humoursome stories oot o' ye. Can ye come ower to the Haugh the morn, and tak a bit check o' dinner wi' some freends that I'm just on the road to inveet to meet you, doctor?"

"It will afford me much pleasure, Mr Ramsay."

"That's richt—that's richt. Gie a yer patients a double dram o' medicine the day, an' that'll save ye trouble the morn. I'll no deteen ye langer i' the noo, since I see ye're for takin' the road. Man, doctor, that's a capital horse ye've gotten. I'll try ye a steeple-chase some day, auld as I am."

Next day I did not forget to mount my horse, which I had christened Prince Charlie, and ride over to the Haugh. It was more the desire to meet again the handsome and black-haired Jessie, than the expectation of a good dinner,—in which the laird was said to excel,—

that made me keep my appointment with scrupulous care, although two or three of my distant patients thereby missed an expected visit. I found a goodly company assembled in the Laird's old-fashioned mansion. Several neighbouring lairds with their wives were present, my excellent friend the minister of the parish, and some of the "chief men" of St Dunstan. A few young ladies graced the company; but it struck me as something singular that I was the only young gentleman who had been honoured with an invitation. Does the Laird really think, I asked myself, that he will keep away the dangerous disease of love from his charming daughter's heart by excluding chivalrous youths from his dinner-table? What intense selfishness there may be in the warmest paternal affection! Nor was selfishness altogether absent from my own heart. I began to feel a kind of secret satisfaction that the coast was clear, and that undivided attentions could be given and received. Jessie was all smiles, grace, and beauty; and before dinner was finished, I was more than charmed—I was bewitched with her manners and conversation. When the ladies retired from table I endeavoured, as on the former occasion, to keep the Laird o' the Haugh in good humour, being now determined, for a particular reason, to rise rather than fall in his estimation. When the minister introduced polemics I flung out a shower of puns; when oxen became the topic I spiced the talk with some racy stories. The ruse succeeded. Between the strong waters and the stories, Laird Ramsay was elevated into a hilarious region, and he would have forgiven his worst enemy on the spot. He was not aware that I was playing with him and upon him for a purpose. When my stock was getting exhausted I started the minister on his everlasting expedition to Rome, and managed, at the commencement of his narrative, to

escape from table unperceived. I was not particularly anxious to "join the ladies;" but I was excessively desirous to have, if possible, some private conversation with Jessie Ramsay. There could be no denying the fact that I—the young medical practitioner of St Dunstan—had fallen in love, how or why it boots not to inquire, with the beautiful daughter of the Laird o' the Haugh. I felt it through every vein of my body, and every fibre of my heart, and I fondly imagined from sundry stealthy glances and sweet suggestive smiles that the dear creature had perceived and reciprocated my attachment. The golden silence of love is the highest eloquence, and the most entrancing song. As good luck and favouring fortune would have it, I had no sooner left the dining-hall than the object of my adoration came tripping down stairs alone. In looking over the drawing-room window a rich flower from her lustrous hair had fallen to the ground, and the lovely creature was now hastening to secure the lost treasure. Here was an opportunity little anticipated, but long remembered. It was impossible that I could be so ungallant as allow her to search for the fallen flower by herself, and we therefore went out into the open air together. There was no moon, but the stars were shining full and brilliant in the firmament. Tall holly bushes and other shrubs surrounded the house within the outer circle of trees. The only two sounds I distinctly heard were the beating of my heart, and the humming sound of the minister's voice as he narrated the incidents of his pilgrimage to the Eternal City. I blessed the good man for his unconscious kindness in granting me this opportunity. Jessie and I proceeded to the place where the flower was supposed to be. I saw it at once, and she saw it at once; but both of us pretended that we had not seen it, and so the sweet search continued. Need I describe, O amiable reader!

how in searching and stooping I felt the touch of her ringleted hair, the warmth of her breath, the delicate softness of her cheek, and imbibed the honey-balm of her lips? At last the flower was found,—I blessed it unaware,—and, under the starlight, replaced it on that lovely head from which it had not been untimely plucked, but had most opportunely fallen.

We returned to the house undiscovered. The Laird, I knew, was in that pleased and placid state when he could have listened for many hours to the Man of the Moon describing the incidents of his celestial travels and the wonders he had seen from his specular tower. I parted with Jessie at the foot of the staircase, pressed her soft warm hand, and re-entered the room which I had rather unceremoniously left. The minister had got upon the Pope, and all the symptoms of "tired nature" were apparent on the faces of most of the listeners. They had the look of a congregation when the thirteenth "head" is being propounded with due deliberation from the pulpit. The Laird had not seen me depart, but he saw me enter. He evidently placed in me the most implicit reliance, and there was no suspicion in his look.

"Hae ye been snuffin' the caller air, doctor?" he inquired.

I answered in the affirmative with a look of perfect innocence, and then the Laird added, wishing apparently to cut short the minister's harangue, "Ay, weel, let's join the leddies noo."

After that evening I was a frequent and welcome visitor at the Haugh. Prince Charlie soon knew the way to his own stall in the Laird's stables. Some golden opportunities occurred when the Laird was absent for interviews and conversations with Jessie. We plighted our mutual troth, and were devoted to each other heart and soul. The one grand difficulty in the way of our happiness was the removal

of the Laird's scruples with regard to the marriage of his daughter. At last, when jogging leisurely homeward to Oakbank one evening, I hit upon a scheme which ultimately resulted in complete success, and gave me possession of the being whom I loved dearer than life.

A wealthy and winsome widow lady resided in the neighbourhood of St Dunstan, and the project entered my brain to make her believe that Laird Ramsay had some notions of her, and also to make him believe that she had a warm side of her heart to him. If I could only get the Laird to marry the widow, I knew that Jessie would soon thereafter be mine. The Laird was open to flattery; he was fond of what Mr Barlas called "butter;" and I did not despair of being able to make him renew his youth. Tact was required in such a delicate undertaking, and I resolved to do my spiriting gently. I began with the Laird first one evening when he was in his mellow after-dinner state. I praised the graces and winsome ways of Mrs Mackinlay, and drew from the Laird the confession that he thought her a "very gude and sociable-like leddy." I then tried a few dexterous passes before hinting that she had a warm side to the Laird o' the Haugh.

"Ye dinna mean to say that Mrs Mackinlay is castin' a sheep's e'e at me, do ye, doctor?"

"I can assure you, Mr Ramsay," I rejoined, "that she speaks of you always with great respect, and seems to wonder why you do not honour her with a visit occasionally."

"Ay, doctor, it's queer what way I

never thocht o' that. She's a sensible leddy after a', Mrs Mackinlay. I think I could do worse than look ower at her hoose some o' these days."

"It's the very thing you ought to do, Mr Ramsay," I replied. "You will find her company highly entertaining. She has an accumulated fund of stories and anecdotes."

"Has she, doctor?—has she? Weel, I'll gang; but what would Jessie say, I wunner?"

I had now put the Laird on the right scent, and I tried my best also with Mrs Mackinlay. I made her aware of the Laird's intended visit, and hinted tenderly its probable object. After a lengthened conversation, in which I exercised all the ingenuity I possessed, I left her with the impression on my mind that Laird Ramsay's addresses when he called would be met half-way. The meeting did take place—it was followed by another and another—and the upshot of the matter was that the eccentric Laird and the wealthy widow were duly wedded, to the astonishment of the whole district. I allowed six months of their wedded bliss to slip past before I asked the Laird's consent to have Jessie removed from the Haugh to Oakbank. A sort of dim suspicion of the whole affair seemed to cross the Laird's mind when I addressed him. A pawky twinkle lit up his eye as he replied, "Ah, ye rogue!—tak her, an' my blessin' alang wi' her. Ye ken whaur to look for a gude wife, an' I daursay ye'll no mak the warst o' gudemen." Thus I won the Laird's daughter, and the paradise of Oakbank, in the village of St Dunstan, was complete in happiness.

MOSS-SIDE.

BY PROFESSOR WILSON.

GILBERT AINSLIE was a poor man ; and he had been a poor man all the days of his life, which were not few, for his thin hair was now waxing gray. He had been born and bred on the small moorland farm which he now occupied ; and he hoped to die there, as his father and grandfather had done before him, leaving a family just above the more bitter wants of this world. Labour, hard and unremitting, had been his lot in life ; but, although sometimes severely tried, he had never repined ; and through all the mist and gloom, and even the storms that had assailed him, he had lived on from year to year in that calm and resigned contentment which unconsciously cheers the hearthstone of the blameless poor. With his own hands he had ploughed, sowed, and reaped his often scanty harvest, assisted, as they grew up, by three sons, who, even in boyhood, were happy to work along with their father in the fields. Out of doors or in, Gilbert Ainslie was never idle. The spade, the shears, the plough-shaft, the sickle, and the flail, all came readily to hands that grasped them well ; and not a morsel of food was eaten under his roof, or a garment worn there, that was not honestly, severely, nobly earned. Gilbert Ainslie was a slave, but it was for them he loved with a sober and deep affection. The thraldom under which he lived God had imposed, and it only served to give his character a shade of silent gravity, but not austere ; to make his smiles fewer, but more heartfelt ; to calm his soul at grace before and after meals, and to kindle it in morning and evening prayer.

There is no need to tell the character of the wife of such a man. Meek and thoughtful, yet gladsome and gay withal,

her heaven was in her house ; and her gentler and weaker hands helped to bar the door against want. Of ten children that had been born to them, they had lost three ; and as they had fed, clothed, and educated them respectably, so did they give them who died a respectable funeral. The living did not grudge to give up, for a while, some of their daily comforts for the sake of the dead ; and bought, with the little sums which their industry had saved, decent mournings, worn on Sabbath, and then carefully laid by. Of the seven that survived, two sons and a daughter were farm-servants in the neighbourhood, while two daughters and two sons remained at home, growing, or grown up, a small, happy, hard-working household.

Many cottages are there in Scotland like Moss-side, and many such humble and virtuous cottagers as were now beneath its roof of straw. The eye of the passing traveller may mark them, or mark them not, but they stand peacefully in thousands over all the land ; and most beautiful do they make it, through all its wide valleys and narrow glens—its low holms, encircled by the rocky walls of some bonny burn—its green mounts, elated with their little crowning groves of plane-trees—its yellow corn-fields—its bare pastoral hill-sides, and all its heathy moors, on whose black bosom lie shining or concealed glades of excessive verdure, inhabited by flowers, and visited only by the far-flying bees. Moss-side was not beautiful to a careless or hasty eye ; but, when looked on and surveyed, it seemed a pleasant dwelling. Its roof, overgrown with grass and moss, was almost as green as the ground out of which its weather-stained walls appeared to grow. The moss behind it was separated from

a little garden, by a narrow slip of arable land, the dark colour of which showed that it had been won from the wild by patient industry, and by patient industry retained. It required a bright sunny day to make Moss-side fair, but then it was fair indeed ; and when the little brown moorland birds were singing their short songs among the rushes and the heather, or a lark, perhaps lured thither by some green barley-field for its undisturbed nest, rose ringing all over the enlivened solitude, the little bleak farm smiled like the paradise of poverty, sad and affecting in its lone and extreme simplicity. The boys and girls had made some plots of flowers among the vegetables that the little garden supplied for their homely meals; pinks and carnations, brought from walled gardens of rich men farther down in the cultivated strath, grew here with somewhat diminished lustre ; a bright show of tulips had a strange beauty in the midst of that moorland ; and the smell of roses mixed well with that of the clover, the beautiful fair clover that loves the soil and the air of Scotland, and gives the rich and balmy milk to the poor man's lips.

In this cottage, Gilbert's youngest child, a girl about nine years of age, had been lying for a week in a fever. It was now Saturday evening, and the ninth day of the disease. Was she to live or die ? It seemed as if a very few hours were between the innocent creature and heaven. All the symptoms were those of approaching death. The parents knew well the change that comes over the human face, whether it be in infancy, youth, or prime, just before the departure of the spirit ; and as they stood together by Margaret's bed, it seemed to them that the fatal shadow had fallen upon her features. The surgeon of the parish lived some miles distant, but they expected him now every moment, and many a wistful look was directed by tearful eyes along

the moor. The daughter who was out at service came anxiously home on this night, the only one that could be allowed her ; for the poor must work in their grief, and servants must do their duty to those whose bread they eat, even when nature is sick—sick at heart. Another of the daughters came in from the potato-field beyond the brae, with what was to be their frugal supper. The calm, noiseless spirit of life was in and around the house, while death seemed dealing with one who, a few days ago, was like light upon the floor, and the sound of music, that always breathed up when most wanted ; glad and joyous in common talk—sweet, silvery, and mournful, when it joined in hymn or psalm. One after the other, they all continued going up to the bedside, and then coming away sobbing or silent, to see their merry little sister, who used to keep dancing all day like a butterfly in a meadow-field, or, like a butterfly with shut wings on a flower, trifling for a while in the silence of her joy, now tossing restlessly on her bed, and scarcely sensible to the words of endearment whispered around her, or the kisses dropped with tears, in spite of themselves, on her burning forehead.

Utter poverty often kills the affections ; but a deep, constant, and common feeling of this world's hardships, and an equal participation in all those struggles by which they may be softened, unite husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters, in thoughtful and subdued tenderness, making them happy indeed, while the circle round the fire is unbroken, and yet preparing them every day to bear the separation, when some one or other is taken slowly or suddenly away. Their souls are not moved by fits and starts, although, indeed, nature sometimes will wrestle with necessity ; and there is a wise moderation both in the joy and the grief of the intelligent

poor, which keeps lasting trouble away from their earthly lot, and prepares them silently and unconsciously for heaven.

"Do you think the child is dying?" said Gilbert, with a calm voice, to the surgeon, who, on his wearied horse, had just arrived from another sick-bed, over the misty range of hills, and had been looking steadfastly for some minutes on the little patient. The humane man knew the family well, in the midst of whom he was standing, and replied, "While there is life there is hope; but my pretty little Margaret is, I fear, in the last extremity." There was no loud lamentation at these words; all had before known, though they would not confess it to themselves, what they now were told; and though the certainty that was in the words of the skilful man made their hearts beat for a little with sicker throbings, made their pale faces paler, and brought out from some eyes a greater gush of tears, yet death had been before in this house, and in this case he came, as he always does, in awe, but not in terror. There were wandering and wavering and dreamy delirious fantasies in the brain of the innocent child; but the few words she indistinctly uttered were affecting, not rending to the heart, for it was plain that she thought herself herding her sheep in the green silent pastures, and sitting wrapped in her plaid upon the low and sunny side of the Birk-knowe. She was too much exhausted—there was too little life, too little breath in her heart—to frame a tune; but some of her words seemed to be from favourite old songs; and at last her mother wept, and turned aside her face, when the child, whose blue eyes were shut, and her lips almost still, breathed out these lines of the beautiful twenty-third Psalm:—

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green: He leadeth me
The quiet waters by.

The child was now left with none but her mother by the bedside, for it was said to be best so; and Gilbert and his family sat down round the kitchen fire, for a while, in silence. In about a quarter of an hour, they began to rise calmly, and to go each to his allotted work. One of the daughters went forth with the pail to milk the cow, and another began to set out the table in the middle of the floor for supper, covering it with a white cloth. Gilbert viewed the usual household arrangements with a solemn and untroubled eye; and there was almost the faint light of a grateful smile on his cheek, as he said to the worthy surgeon, "You will partake of our fare, after your day's travel and toil of humanity?" In a short silent half-hour, the potatoes and oat-cakes, butter and milk, were on the board; and Gilbert, lifting up his toil-hardened but manly hand, with a slow motion, at which the room was as hushed as if it had been empty, closed his eyes in reverence, and asked a blessing. There was a little stool, on which no one sat, by the old man's side. It had been put there unwittingly, when the other seats were all placed in their usual order; but the golden head that was won't to rise at that part of the table was now wanting. There was silence—not a word was said—their meal was before them—God had been thanked, and they began to eat.

While they were at their silent meal a horseman came galloping to the door, and, with a loud voice, called out that he had been sent express with a letter to Gilbert Ainslie; at the same time rudely, and with an oath, demanding a dram for his trouble. The eldest son, a lad of eighteen, fiercely seized the bridle of his horse, and turned its head away from the door. The rider, somewhat alarmed at the flushed face of the powerful stripling, threw down the letter and rode off. Gilbert took the letter from his son's hand, casting, at

the same time, a half-upbraiding look on his face, that was returning to its former colour. "I feared,"—said the youth, with a tear in his eye,—“ I feared that the brute's voice, and the trampling of the horse's feet, would have disturbed her.” Gilbert held the letter hesitatingly in his hand, as if afraid at that moment to read it ; at length he said aloud to the surgeon :—“ You know that I am a poor man, and debt, if justly incurred, and punctually paid when due, is no dishonour.” Both his hand and his voice shook slightly as he spoke ; but he opened the letter from the lawyer, and read it in silence. At this moment his wife came from her child's bedside, and, looking anxiously at her husband, told him “not to mind about the money, that no man who knew him would arrest his goods, or put him into prison. Though, dear me, it is cruel to be put to thus, when our bairn is dying, and when, if so it be the Lord's will, she should have a decent burial, poor innocent, like them that went before her.” Gilbert continued reading the letter with a face on which no emotion could be discovered ; and then, folding it up, he gave it to his wife, told her she might read it if she chose, and then put it into his desk in the room, beside the poor dear bairn. She took it from him, without reading it, and crushed it into her bosom : for she turned her ear towards her child, and thinking she heard it stir, ran out hastily to its bedside.

Another hour of trial passed, and the child was still swimming for its life. The very dogs knew there was grief in the house, and lay without stirring, as if hiding themselves, below the long table at the window. One sister sat with an unfinished gown on her knees, that she had been sewing for the dear child, and still continued at the hopeless work, she scarcely knew why ; and often, often putting up her hand to wipe

away a tear. “ What is that ? ” said the old man to his eldest daughter. “ What is that you are laying on the shelf ? ” She could scarcely reply that it was a riband and an ivory comb that she had brought for little Margaret, against the night of the dancing-school ball. And at these words the father could not restrain a long, deep, and bitter groan ; at which the boy, nearest in age to his dying sister, looked up weeping in his face ; and, letting the tattered book of old ballads, which he had been poring on, but not reading, fall out of his hands, he rose from his seat, and, going into his father's bosom, kissed him, and asked God to bless him : for the holy heart of the boy was moved within him ; and the old man, as he embraced him, felt that, in his innocence and simplicity, he was indeed a comforter. “ The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away,” said the old man ; “ blessed be the name of the Lord ! ”

The outer door gently opened, and he whose presence had in former years brought peace and resignation hither, when their hearts had been tried even as they now were tried, stood before them. On the night before the Sabbath, the minister of Auchindown never left his manse, except, as now, to visit the sick or dying bed. Scarcely could Gilbert reply to his first question about his child, when the surgeon came from the bedroom, and said—“ Margaret seems lifted up by God's hand above death and the grave : I think she will recover. She has fallen asleep ; and, when she wakes, I hope—I believe—that the danger will be past, and that your child will live.”

They were all prepared for death ; but now they were found unprepared for life. One wept that had till then locked up all her tears within her heart ; another gave a short palpitating shriek ; and the tender-hearted Isobel, who had nursed the child when it was a baby, fainted away. The youngest

brother gave way to gladsome smiles ; and calling out his dog Hector, who used to sport with him and his little sister on the moor, he told the tidings to the dumb irrational creature, whose eyes, it is certain, sparkled with a sort of joy. The clock for some days had been prevented from striking the hours ; but the silent fingers pointed to the hour of nine ; and that, in the cottage of Gilbert Ainslie, was the stated hour of family worship. His own honoured minister took the Book,—

He waled a portion with judicious care,
And, " Let us worship God," he said, with
solemn air.

A chapter was read—a prayer said ; and so, too, was sung a psalm ; but it was sung low, and with suppressed voices, lest the child's saving sleep might be broken ; and now and then the female voices trembled, or some one of them ceased altogether ; for there had been tribulation and anguish, and now hope and faith were tried in the joy of thanksgiving.

The child still slept ; and its sleep seemed more sound and deep. It appeared almost certain that the crisis was over, and that the flower was not to fade. " Children," said Gilbert, " our happiness is in the love we bear to one another ; and our duty is in submitting to and serving God. Gracious, indeed, has He been unto us. Is not the recovery of our little darling, dancing, singing Margaret, worth all the gold that ever was mined ? If we had had thousands of thousands, would we not have filled up her grave with the worthless dross of gold, rather than that she should have gone down there with her sweet face and all her rosy smiles ?" There was no reply, but a joyful sobbing all over the room.

" Never mind the letter, nor the debt, father," said the eldest daughter. " We have all some little thing of our own,—a few pounds,—and we shall be

able to raise as much as will keep arrest and prison at a distance. Or if they do take our furniture out of the house, all except Margaret's bed, who cares ? We will sleep on the floor ; and there are potatoes in the field, and clear water in the spring. We need fear nothing, want nothing ; blessed be God for all His mercies !"

Gilbert went into the sick-room, and got the letter from his wife, who was sitting at the head of the bed, watching, with a heart blessed beyond all bliss, the calm and regular breathings of her child. " This letter," said he, mildly, " is not from a hard creditor. Come with me while I read it aloud to our children." The letter was read aloud, and it was well fitted to diffuse pleasure and satisfaction through the dwelling of poverty. It was from an executor to the will of a distant relative, who had left Gilbert Ainslie £1500.

" The sum," said Gilbert, " is a large one to folks like us, but not, I hope, large enough to turn our heads, or make us think ourselves all lords and ladies. It will do more, far more, than put me fairly above the world at last. I believe that, with it, I may buy this very farm, on which my forefathers have toiled. But God, whose providence has sent this temporal blessing, may He send us wisdom and prudence how to use it, and humble and grateful hearts to us all."

" You will be able to send me to school all the year round now, father," said the youngest boy. " And you may leave the flail to your sons, now, father," said the eldest. " You may hold the plough still, for you draw a straighter furrow than any of us ; but hard work for young sinews ; and you may sit now oftener in your arm-chair by the ingle. You will not need to rise now in the dark, cold, and snowy winter mornings, and keep threshing corn in the barn for hours by candle-light, before the late dawning."

There was silence, gladness, and sorrow, and but little sleep in Moss-side, between the rising and the setting of the stars, that were now out in thousands, clear, bright, and sparkling over the unclouded sky. Those who had lain down for an hour or two in bed could scarcely be said to have slept ; and when about morning little Margaret awoke, an altered creature, pale, languid, and unable to turn herself on her lowly bed, but with

meaning in her eyes, memory in her mind, affection in her heart, and coolness in all her veins, a happy group were watching the first faint smile that broke over her features ; and never did one who stood there forget that Sabbath morning on which she seemed to look round upon them all with a gaze of fair and sweet bewilderment, like one half conscious of having been rescued from the power of the grave.

MY FIRST FEE.

A CHAPTER FROM THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN ADVOCATE.

"Fee him, father, fee him."

SEVEN long yearning years had elapsed since, with the budding anticipation of youthful hope, I had assumed the lugubrious insignia of the bar. During that dreadful time, each morn, as old St Giles told the hour of nine, might I be seen insinuating my emaciated figure within the penetralia of the Parliament House, where, begowned and bewigged, and with the zeal of a Powell or a Barclay, I paced about till two. These peripatetic practices had well-nigh ruined me in Wellingtons, and latterly in shoes. My little Erskine was in pawn ; while my tailor and my landlady threw out unmistakable and ominous hints regarding their long bills and longer credit. I dared not understand them, but consoled myself with the thought, that the day would come when my tailor would cease his dunning, and my landlady her clamour.

I had gone the different circuits, worn and torn my gown, seated myself in awful contemplation on the side benches, maintained angry argument on legal points with some more favoured

brother, within earshot of a wily writer. In fine, I had resorted to every means that fancy could suggest, or experience dictate ; but as yet my eyes had not seen, nor my pocket felt—a Fee. Alas ! this was denied. I might be said to be, as yet, no barrister : for what is a lawyer without a fee ? A nonentity ! a shadow ! To my grief, I seemed to be fast verging to the latter ; and I doubt much whether the "Anatomie vivant" could have stood the comparison—so much had my feeless fast fed on my flesh !

I cannot divine the reason for this neglect of my legal services. In my own heart, I had vainly imagined the sufficiency of my tact and subtlety in unravelling a nice point ; neither had I been wanting in attention to my studies ; for Heaven and my landlady can bear witness, that my consumption of coal and candle would have sufficed any two ordinary readers. There was not a book or treatise on law which I had not dived into. I was insatiable in literature ; but the world and the

writers seemed ignorant of my brain be-labouring system, and sedulously determined that my *fee-line* propensities should not be gratified.

Never did I meet an agent either in or out of Court, but my heart and hand felt a pleasing glow of hope and of joy at the prospect of pocketing a fee; but how often have they turned their backs without even the mortifying allusion to such a catastrophe! How often have I turned round in whirling ecstasy as I felt some seemingly patronising palm tap gently on my shoulders with such a tap as writers' clerks are wont to use; but oh, ye gods! a grinning wretch merely asked me how I did, and passed on!

Nor were my non-legal friends more kind. There was an old gentleman, who, I knew (for I made it my business to enquire), had some thoughts of a law-plea. From him I received an invitation to dinner. Joyfully, as at all times, but more so on this occasion, was the summons obeyed. I had laid a train to introduce the subject of his wrongs at a time which might *suit* best, and with this plan I commenced my machinations. The old fox was too cunning even for me; he too had his plot, and had hit upon the expedient of obtaining my opinion without a fee—the skinflint! Long and doubtful was the contest; hint succeeded hint, question after question was put, till at last my entertainer was victorious, and I retired crestfallen and feeless from the field! By the soul of Erskine, had it not been for his dinners, I should have cut him for ever! Still I grubbed with this one, cultivated an acquaintance with that, but all to no purpose; no one pitied my position. My torments were those of the lost! Hope (not the President) alone buoyed me up; visions of future sovereigns, numerous as those which appeared to Banquo of old, but of a better and more useful kind, flitted before my charmed imagination. Pride,

poverty, and starvation pushed me on. What! said I, shall it be hinted that I am likely neither to have a fee nor a feed? Tell it not in the First Division; publish it not in the Outer House! All my thoughts were riveted to one object—to one object all my endeavours were bent, and to accomplish this seemed the ultimatum of bliss.

Often have I looked with envy upon the more favoured candidates for judicial fame—those who never return to their domicile or their dinner, but to find their tables groaning with briefs! How different from my case! My case? What case? I have no case! Not one fee to work its own desolateness! Months and months passed on, still success came not! The hoped-for event came not; resolution died within me; I formed serious intentions of being even with the profession. As the profession had cut me, I intended to have cut the profession. In my wants, I would have robbed, but my hand was withheld by the thought that the jesters of the stove might taunt me thus: "He could not live, so he died, by the law." I have often thought that there is a great similarity between the hangman and the want of a fee; the one is the finisher of the law, the other of lawyers!

Pondering on my griefs, with my feet on the expiring embers of a sea-coal fire, the chair in that swinging position so much practised and approved in Yankee-land,—the seat destined for a clerk occupied by my cat, for I love everything of the *fe-line* species,—my cogitations were disturbed by an application for admittance at the outer door. It was not the rat-tat of the postman, nor the rising and falling attack of the man of fashion, but a compound of both, which evidently bespoke the knockee unaccustomed to town. I am somewhat curious in knocks; I admire the true principles of the art, by which one may distin-

guish the peer from the postman—the dun from the dilettante—the footman from the furnisher. But there was something in this knock which baffled all my skill; yet sweet withal, thrilling through my heart with a joy unfeigned before. Some spirit must have presided in the sound, for it seemed to me the music of the spheres.

A short time elapsed, and my landlady “opened wide the infernal doors.” Now hope cut capers—(Lazenby, thou wert not to blame, for of thy delicacies I dared not even dream!)—now hope cut capers within me! Heavy footsteps were heard in the passage, and one of the lords of the creation marched his calves into the apartment. With alacrity, I conveyed my *corpus juris* to meet him, and, with all civility, I requested him to be seated. My landlady with her apron dusted the armchair (I purchased it at a sale of Lord M——’s *effects*, not *causes*,—expecting to catch inspiration). In this said chair my man ensconced his clay.

I had commenced my survey of his person, when my eyes were attracted by a basilisk-like bunch of papers which the good soul held in his hand. In ecstasy I gazed—characters were marked on them which could not be mistaken; a less keen glance than mine might have discovered their import. My joy was now beyond all bounds, testifying itself by sundry kickings and contortions of the body. I began to fear the worthy man might think me mad, and repent him of his errand; I calmed myself, and sat down. My guest thrust into my hands the papers, and then proceeded to issue letters of open doors against his dexter pocket. His intentions were evident; with difficulty could I restrain myself. For some minutes he “groped about the vast abyss,” during which time my agitation increased so much that I could not have answered one question, even out of that favourite chapter of one of our institutional

writers, “On the Institution of Fees.” But let me describe the man to whom I owe so much.

He was a short, squat, farmer-looking being, who might have rented some fifty acres or so. Though stinted in his growth upwards, Dame Nature seemed determined to make him amends by an increase of dimension in every other direction. His nose and face spoke volumes—ay, libraries—of punch and ale; these potations had also made themselves manifested lower down, by the magnitude of the *belli-gerent* powers. There was in his face a cunning leer, in his figure a knowing *tournure*, which was still further heightened by his dress; this consisted of a green coat, which gave evident signs of its utter incapability of ever being identified with Stultz; cords and continuations encased the lower parts of his carcase; a belcher his throat; while the whole was surmounted by a castor of the most preposterous breadth of brim, and shallow capacity. But in this man’s appearance there was something that pleased me; something of a nature superior to other mortals. I might have been prejudiced, but his face and figure seemed to me more beautiful than morning.

Never did I gaze with a more complacent benevolence on a breeches-pocket. At last he succeeded in dragging from its depths a huge old stocking, through which “the yellow-lettered Geordie’s keeked.” With what raptures did I look on that old stocking, the produce, I presumed, of the stock-ing of his farm. It seemed to possess the power of fascination, for my eyes could not quit it. Even when my client (for now I calculated upon him) began to speak, my attention still wandered to the stocking. He told me of a dispute with his landlord about some matters relating to his farm, that he was wronged, and would have the law of the laird, though he should

spend his last shilling (here I looked with increased raptures at the stocking). On the recommendation of the minister (good man !), he had sought me for advice. He then opened wide the jaws of his homely purse—he inserted his paw—now my heart beat—he made

a jingling noise—my heart beat quicker still—he pulled forth his two interesting fingers—oh, ecstasy ! he pressed five guineas into my extended hand—they touched the virgin palm, and oh, ye gods ! I was FEE'D !!!—*Edinburgh Literary Journal*.

THE KIRK OF TULLIBODY.

THE parish of Tullibody, in Clackmannanshire, now united with Alloa, was, before the Reformation, an independent ecclesiastical district. The manner in which it lost its separate character is curious. In the year 1559, when Monsieur D'Oysel commanded the French troops on the coast of Fife, they were alarmed by the arrival of the English fleet, and thought of nothing but a hasty retreat. It was in the month of January, and at the breaking of a great storm. William Kirkaldy of Grange, commander of the congregational forces, attentive to the circumstances in which his enemies were caught, took advantage of this situation, and marched with great expedition towards Stirling, and cut the bridge of Tullibody, which was over the Devon, to prevent their retreat. By this manœuvre, the French found themselves completely enclosed. They were driven to an extremity which obliged them to resort to an extraordinary expedient to effect their escape. They lifted the roof off the church of Tullibody, and laid it along the broken part of the bridge, by which means they effected a safe retreat to Stirling.

Such a dilapidation of the church caused the Tullibodians to proceed to the adjacent kirk of Alloa, and in a short time the parish ceased to be independent. The burying-ground round the ancient place of worship, now repaired, still remains ; and on the north side of it, where there had been formerly an entry, there is a stone coffin, with a niche for the head, and two for the arms, covered with a thick hollowed lid like a tureen. The lid is a good deal broken, but a curious tradition is preserved of the coffin. It is related that in early times a young lady of the neighbourhood had declared her affection for the minister, who, either from his station or want of inclination, made no returns. So vexed was the lady on perceiving his indifference, that, in a short while, she sickened, and at last died of grief. While on her death-bed, she left it as her last request, that she should not be buried in the earth, but that her body should be placed in a stone coffin, and laid at the entry to the church ; which was done, and to this day, the stone retains the name of the “ Maiden’s Stone.”—*Chambers’ Edinburgh Journal, 1832.*

THE PROGRESS OF INCONSTANCY; OR, THE SCOTS TUTOR.

"Sweet, tender sex! with snares encompassed round,
On others hang thy comforts and thy rest."—HOGG.

NATURE has made woman weak, that she might receive with gratitude the protection of man. Yet how often is this appointment perverted! How often does her protector become her oppressor! Even custom seems leagued against her. Born with the tenderest feelings, her whole life is commonly a struggle to suppress them. Placed in the most favourable circumstances, her choice is confined to a few objects; and unless where singularly fortunate, her fondest partialities are only a modification of gratitude. She may reject, but cannot invite: may tell what would make her wretched, but dare not even whisper what would make her happy; and, in a word, exercises merely a negative influence upon the most important event of her life. Man has leisure to look around him, and may marry at any age, with almost equal advantage; but woman must improve the fleeting moment, and determine quickly, at the hazard of determining rashly. The spring-time of her beauty will not last; its wane will be the signal for the flight of her lovers; and if the present opportunity is neglected, she may be left to experience the only species of misfortune for which the world evinces no sympathy. How cruel, then, to increase the misery of her natural dependence! How ungenerous to add treachery to strength, and deceive or disappoint those whose highest ambition is our favour, and whose only safety is our honesty!

William Arbuthnot was born in a remote county of Scotland, where his father rented a few acres of land, which his own industry had reclaimed from the greatest wildness to a state of con-

siderable fertility. Having given, even in his first attempts at learning, those indications of a retentive memory, which the partiality of a parent easily construes into a proof of genius, he was early destined for the Scottish Church, and regarded as a philosopher before he had emerged from the nursery. While his father pleased himself with the prospect of seeing his name associated with the future greatness of his son, his mother, whose ambition took a narrower range, thought she could die contented if she should see him seated in the pulpit of his native church; and perhaps, from a pardonable piece of vanity, speculated as frequently upon the effect his appearance would have upon the hearts of the neighbouring daughters, as his discourses upon the minds of their mothers. This practice, so common among the poorer classes in Scotland, of making one of their children a scholar, to the prejudice, as is alleged, of the rest, has been often remarked, and sometimes severely censured. But probably the objections that have been urged against it, derive their chief force from the exaggerations upon which they are commonly founded. It is not in general true that parents, by bestowing the rudiments of a liberal education upon one of the family, materially injure the condition or prospects of the rest. For it must be remembered that the plebeian student is soon left to trust to his own exertions for support, and, like the monitor of a Lancastrian seminary, unites the characters of pupil and master, and teaches and is taught by turns.

But to proceed with our little narrative. The parish schoolmaster having

intimated to the parents of his pupil, that the period was at hand when he should be sent to prosecute his studies at the university, the usual preparations were made for his journey, and his departure was fixed for the following day, when he was to proceed to Edinburgh under escort of the village carrier and his black dog Cæsar, two of the eldest and most intimate of his acquaintance. Goldsmith's poetical maxim, that little things are great to little men, is universally true ; and this was an eventful day for the family of Belhervie, for that was the name of the residence of Mr Arbuthnot. The father was as profuse of his admonitions as the mother was of her tears, and had a stranger beheld the afflicted group, he would have naturally imagined that they were bewailing some signal calamity, in place of welcoming an event to which they had long looked forward with pleasure. But the feelings of affectionate regret, occasioned by this separation, were most seasonably suspended by the receipt of a letter from Mr Coventry, a respectable farmer in the neighbourhood, in which that gentleman offered to engage their son for a few years, as a companion and tutor to his children. This was an offer which his parents were too prudent to reject, particularly as it might prove the means of future patronage as well as of present emolument. It was therefore immediately agreed upon, that William should himself be the bearer of their letter of acceptance, and proceed forthwith to his new residence. On this occasion he was admonished anew ; but the advices were different from those formerly given, and were delivered by a different person. His mother was now the principal speaker ; and, instead of warning him against the snares that are laid for youth in a great city, she furnished him with some rude lessons on the principles of good-breeding, descending to a number of particulars too minute to be enumerated

here. William listened to her harangue with becoming reverence and attention, and on the following morning, for the first time, bade farewell to his affectionate parents.

On the afternoon of the same day, he arrived at Daisybank, where he was welcomed with the greatest cordiality. His appearance was genteel and prepossessing, and it was not long before his new friends discovered, that the slight degree of awkwardness which at first clung to his manners, proceeded more from bashfulness and embarrassment than natural rusticity. But as he began to feel himself at home, this embarrassment of manner gradually gave place to an easy but unobtrusive politeness. Indeed it would not have been easy for a youth of similar views, at his first outset in life, to have fallen into more desirable company. Mr and Mrs Coventry were proverbial among their neighbours for the simplicity and purity of their manners, and they had laboured, not unsuccessfully, to stamp a similar character upon the minds of their children. Their family consisted of two sons and two daughters, the former of whom were confided to the care of William.

Mary, the eldest of the four, now in her sixteenth or seventeenth year, was in every respect the most interesting object at Daisybank. To a mind highly cultivated for her years, she united many of those personal graces and attractions which command little homage in the crowd, but open upon us in the shade of retirement, and lend to the domestic circle its most irresistible charms. In stature she scarcely reached the middle size. To the beauty derived from form and colour she had few pretensions ; yet when her fine blue eyes moistened with a tear at a tale of distress, or beamed an unaffected welcome to the stranger or the friend, he must have been more or less than man who felt not for her a sentiment

Burn Bass
length of skirt 22 in
.. .. waist 14 ~~14~~ ..
" " " 14 " "
sleeve 13- "
neck
shoulder 5-





superior to admiration. Hers, in a word, was the beauty of expression—the beauty of a mind reflected, in which the dullest disciple of Lavater could not for a moment have mistaken her real character. Her education had been principally conducted under the eye of her parents, and might be termed domestic rather than fashionable. Not that she was entirely a stranger to those acquirements which are deemed indispensable in modern education. She had visited occasionally the great metropolis, though, owing to the prudent solicitude of her parents, her residence there had been comparatively short, yet probably long enough to acquire all its useful or elegant accomplishments, without any admixture of its fashionable frivolities.

From this hasty portraiture of Miss Coventry, it will be easily believed that it was next to impossible for a youth nearly of the same age, and not dissimilar in his dispositions, to remain long insensible to charms that were gradually maturing before his eyes, and becoming every day more remarkable. Fortunately, however, the idea of dependence attached to his situation, and a temper naturally diffident determined him to renounce for ever a hope which he feared in his present circumstances would be deemed ungrateful and even presumptuous. But this was waging war with nature, a task which he soon found to be above his strength. He had now, therefore, to abandon the hope of victory for the safety of retreat, and content himself with concealing those sentiments he found it impossible to subdue. Yet so deceitful is love, that even this modest hope was followed with disappointment. One fine evening in June, when he was about to unbend from the duties of the day, and retire to muse on the amiable Mary, he encountered the fair wanderer herself, who was probably returning from a similar errand. He accosted her in

evident confusion ; and, without being conscious of what he said, invited her to join him in a walk to a neighbouring height. His request was complied with in the same spirit it had been made in, for embarrassment is often contagious, particularly the embarrassment arising from love. On this occasion he intended to summon up all his powers of conversation, and yet his companion had never found him so silent. Some commonplace compliments to the beauty of the evening were almost the only observations which escaped his lips, and these he uttered more in the manner of a sleep-walker than a lover. They soon reached the limit of their walk, and rested upon an eminence that commanded the prospect of an extensive valley below. Day was fast declining to that point which is termed twilight, when the whole irrational creation seem preparing for rest, and only man dares to intrude upon the silence of nature. Miss Coventry beheld the approach of night with some uneasiness, and dreading to be seen with William alone, she began to rally him upon his apparent absence and confusion, and proposed that they should immediately return to the house. At mention of this, William started as from a dream, and being unable longer to command his feelings, he candidly confessed to her the cause of his absence and dejection. He dwelt with much emotion upon his own demerit, and voluntarily accused himself for the presumption of a hope which he never meant to have revealed until the nearer accomplishment of his views had rendered it less imprudent and romantic. He declared that he would sooner submit to any hardship that incur the displeasure of her excellent parents, and entreated that, whatever were her sentiments with regard to the suit he was so presumptuous as to prefer, she might assist him in concealing from them a circumstance which he feared

would be attended with that consequence. To this tender and affectionate appeal, the gentle Mary could only answer with her sighs and blushes. She often indeed attempted to speak, but the words as often died upon her lips, and they had nearly reached home before she could even whisper an answer to the reiterated question of her lover. But she did answer at last ; and never was a monarch more proud of his conquest, or the homage of tributary princes, than William was of the simple fealty of the heart of Mary.

In the bosom of this happy family William now found his hours glide away so agreeably that he looked forward with real regret to the termination of his engagement. His condition was perhaps one of those in which the nearest approach is made to perfect happiness ; when the youthful mind, unseduced by the blandishments of ambition, confines its regards to a few favourite objects, and dreads a separation from them as the greatest of evils. The contrast between the patriarchal simplicity of his father's fireside, and the comparative elegance of Mr Coventry's parlour, for a season dazzled him with its novelty ; while the ripening graces of Mary threw around him a fascination which older and more unsusceptible minds than his might have found it difficult to resist. In his domestic establishment Mr Coventry aimed at nothing beyond comfort and gentility. William was therefore treated in every respect as an equal, and was never banished from his patron's table to make room for a more important guest, or condemned to hold Lent over a solitary meal, while the family were celebrating a holiday.

All our ideas are relative, and we estimate every thing by comparison. Upon this principle, William thought no female so lovely or amiable as Miss Coventry, and no residence so delightful as Daisybank. And he would not

have exchanged his feelings, while seated on a winter evening amidst his favourite circle, scanning, for their amusement, a page of history, or the columns of a newspaper, while the snugness and comfort that reigned within made him forget the storm that pelted without, for the most delicious paradise an eastern imagination ever painted.

It will thus readily be imagined, that the saddest day of our tutor's life was that on which he parted from this amiable family. He had here, he believed, spent the happiest moments of his existence, and instead of rejoicing that he had passed through one stage of his apprenticeship, he dwelt upon the past with pleasure, and looked forward to the future with pain.

Fortune, however, presented an insuperable obstacle to his spending his days in the inaction of private study ; and he knew that he could neither gain, nor deserved to gain, the object of his affection, without establishing himself in life, by pursuing the course which had been originally chalked out to him. After, therefore, "pledging oft to meet again," he bade adieu to Daisybank, loaded with the blessings of the best of parents, and followed with the prayers of the best of daughters. He now paid a farewell visit to his own parents ; and, after remaining with them a few days, he proceeded to Edinburgh, and for a short period felt his melancholy relieved, by the thousand novelties that attract the notice of a stranger in a great city. But this was only a temporary relief, and as he had no friend in whom he could confide, he soon felt himself solitary in the midst of thousands. Often, when the Professor was expatiating upon the force of the Greek particles, his imagination was hovering over the abodes he had forsaken ; and frequently it would have been more difficult for him to have given an account of the lectures he had been attending, than to have calculated

the probability of what was passing at a hundred miles' distance. But this absence and dejection at last wore off ; and as he possessed good natural talents, and had been an industrious student formerly, he soon distinguished himself in his classes, and before the usual period was engaged as a tutor in one of the best families in Scotland.

This event formed another important era in his life. His prospects were now flattering ; and as vanity did not fail to exaggerate them, he soon dropped a considerable portion of his humility, and began to regard himself as a young man of merit, to whom fortune was lavish of her favours. In his leisure hours he was disposed to mingle much in society, and, as his manners and address were easy and engaging, scarcely a week elapsed that that did not add to the number of his friends. The affections, when divided into many channels, cannot run deep in any, and, probably, for every new acquaintance whom William honoured with his esteem, it required a sacrifice of friendship at the expense of love, and produced some abatement of that devotion of soul which accompanies every true and permanent attachment. At Daisybank he had seen a simple favourite of the graces, but here he beheld the daughters of wealth and of fashion, surrounded with all the gloss of art, and soon began to waver in his attachment, and even to regard his engagement as little more than a youthful frolic. Still this temper of mind was not attained without many struggles between love and ambition, honour and interest ; nor could he ever for a moment commune with himself, without feeling remorse for his inconstancy and ingratitude. He could not annihilate the conviction, that Miss Coventry was as faithful and worthy as ever, and had she been present to appeal to his senses, it is probable he might have been preserved from the crime of apostasy. But these were fits of reflec-

tion and repentance which repetition soon deprived of their poignancy. The world, the seductive world, returned with all its opiates and charms, to stifle in his bosom the feelings of honour, and obliterate every trace of returning tenderness. After this he became less punctual in his correspondence with Miss Coventry, and in place of anticipating the arrival of her letters, as he was wont to do, he allowed them to be sent slowly to his lodgings, opened them without anxiety, and read them without interest. Of all this inconstancy, ingratitude, and neglect, the simple Mary remained a silent, though not unconcerned spectator. Kind and generous by nature, and judging of others by herself, she framed a thousand excuses for his negligence ; and when he did descend to write to her, answered him as though she had been unconscious of any abatement in his attentions.

Matters remained in this uncertain state for the space of three long years—at least they seemed long to Miss Coventry—when William received his licence as a preacher. He now therefore thought of redeeming a pledge he had given to the minister of his native parish, to make his first public appearance in his pulpit ; and after giving due intimation, he departed for the parish of —, with his best sermon in the pocket of his best coat. The account of his visit spread with telegraphic despatch, long before telegraphs were invented, and was known over half the county many days before his arrival. This was another great and eventful day for his mother. She blessed Providence that she had lived to see the near fulfilment of her most anxious wish, and rising a little in her ambition, thought she could now die contented, if she should see him settled in a living of his own, and be greeted by her neighbours with the envied name of grandmother.—As William was expected to dine with his parents on his

way to the parsonage, or, as it is called in Scotland, the manse, of —, great preparations were made for his reception, and for the appearance of the whole family at church on the following Sunday. Mrs Arbuthnot drew from the family-chest her wedding-gown, which had only seen the sun twice during thirty summers ; and her husband, for the first time, reluctantly applied a brush to his holiday suit, which appeared, from the antiquity of its fashion, to have descended, like the garments of the Swiss, through many successive generations of the Arbuthnots.

The little church of H—— was crowded to the door, perhaps for the first time, long before the bellman had given the usual signal. Mr Coventry, though residing in a different parish, had made a journey thither with several of his family, for the purpose of witnessing the first public appearance of his friend. In this party was the amiable Mary, who took a greater interest in the event than any one, save the preacher, was aware of.

William, on this occasion, recited a well written discourse with ease and fluency, and impressed his audience with a high opinion of his talents and piety. Some of the elder of them, indeed, objected to his gestures and pronunciation, which they thought "new fangled" and theatrical ; but they all agreed in thinking him a clever lad, and a great honour to his parents. His mother was now overwhelmed with compliments and congratulations from all quarters, which she received with visible marks of pride and emotion. Mr Coventry waited in the churchyard till the congregation had retired, to salute his friend, and invite him to spend a few days at Daisybank. Mary, who hung on her father's arm, curtsied, blushed, and looked down. She had no well-turned compliment to offer on the occasion, but her eyes expressed something at

parting, which once would have been sweeter to his soul than the applause of all the world beside.

Ambition, from the beginning, has been the bane of love. War and peace are not more opposite in their nature and effects than those rival passions, and the bosom that is agitated with the cares of the one has little relish for the gentle joys of the other. William beheld in the person of Miss Coventry all he had been taught to regard as amiable or estimable in woman ; but the recollection of the respect that had been shown him by females of distinction, mixed with exaggerated notions of his own merit, made him undervalue those simple unobtrusive graces he once valued so highly, and think almost any conquest easy after he had been settled in the rich living of B——, which had been promised him by his patron.

On the following day he paid a visit to Daisybank, and received the most cordial welcome from a family who sympathised almost equally with his parents in his prospects and advancement. During his stay there, he had frequent opportunities of seeing Miss Coventry alone, but he neglected, or rather avoided them all ; and when rallied on the subject of marriage, declaimed on the pleasures of celibacy, and hinted, with a good deal of insincerity, his intention of living single. Although these speeches were like daggers to the mind of her who regretted she could not rival him in inconstancy and indifference, they produced no visible alteration in her behaviour. Hers was not one of those minds in which vanity predominates over every other feeling, and where disappointment is commonly relieved by the hatred or resentment which it excites. Her soul was soft as the passion that enslaved it, and the traces of early affection are not easily effaced from a mind into which the darker passions have never entered.

William bade adieu to Miss Coventry without dropping one word upon which she could rear the superstructure of hope, and carried with him her peace of mind, as he had formerly carried with him her affections. From that hour she became pensive and melancholy, in spite of all her efforts to appear cheerful and happy. She had rejected many lovers for the inconstant's sake, but that gave her no concern. Her union with him had been long the favourite object of her life, and she could have patiently resigned existence, now that its object was lost. But she shuddered at the thought of the shock it would give her affectionate parents, for the softer feelings of our nature are all of one family, and the tenderest wives have ever been the most dutiful daughters.

It was impossible for Mary long to conceal the sorrow which consumed her. Her fading cheeks and heavy eyes gave daily indications of what her lips refused to utter. Her parents became deeply alarmed at these symptoms of indisposition, and anxiously and unceasingly inquired into the cause of her illness; but her only answer was, that she felt no pain. The best physicians were immediately consulted upon her case, who recommended change of air and company; but all these remedies were tried without effect. The poison of disappointment had taken deep root in her heart, and defied the power of medicine.

Her attendants, when they found all their prescriptions ineffectual, began to ascribe her malady to its real cause, and hinted to her parents their apprehensions that she had been crossed in love. The good people, though greatly surprised at the suggestion, had too much prudence to treat it with indifference, and they left no means untried, consistent with a regard for the feelings of their child, to wile from her the important secret. At first she endeavoured to evade their inquiries; but finding it

impossible to allay their apprehensions without having recourse to dissimulation, she confessed to her mother her attachment to William, concealing only the promises he had made to her, and every circumstance that imputed to him the slightest degree of blame. At the same time she entreated them, with the greatest earnestness, that no use might be made of a secret which she wished to have carried with her to the grave. This was a hard task imposed upon her parents. They felt equally with herself the extreme delicacy of making the disclosure; but, on the other hand, they contemplated nothing but the probable loss of their child; an event, the bare apprehension of which filled their minds with the bitterest anguish. After many anxious consultations, Mr Coventry determined, unknown to any but his wife, to pay a visit to William, and ascertain his sentiments with regard to his daughter.

Upon his arrival at Edinburgh, he found that his friend had departed for the manse of B——, with which he had been recently presented. This event, which in other circumstances would have given him the liveliest pleasure, awakened on this occasion emotions of a contrary nature, as he feared it would make his now reverend friend more elevated in his notions, and consequently more averse to a union with his daughter. He did not, however, on that account conceal the real object of his journey, or endeavour to accomplish his purpose by stratagem or deceit. He candidly disclosed his daughter's situation and sentiments, requesting of his friend that he would open to him his mind with equal candour; and added, that although he held wealth to be an improper motive in marriage, and hoped that his daughter did not require such a recommendation, in the event of this union, whatever he possessed would be liberally shared with him.

On hearing of the situation of Miss Coventry, William became penetrated with the deepest remorse ; and being aware that his affection for her was rather stifled than estranged, he declared his willingness to make her his wife. These words operated like a charm upon the drooping spirits of the father, who embraced his friend with ardour, and besought him immediately to accompany him home, that they might lose no time in making a communication, which he fondly hoped would have a similar effect upon the spirits of his daughter.

They departed accordingly together, indulging in the pleasing hope that all would yet be well ; but on their arrival at Daisybank, they were seriously alarmed to hear that Miss Coventry had been considerably worse since her father left home. She was now entirely confined to her chamber, and seemed to care for nothing so much as solitude, and an exemption from the trouble of talking. As soon as she was informed of the arrival of their visitor, she suspected he had been sent for, and therefore refused to see him ; but upon being assured by her mother, who found deceit in this instance indispensable, that his visit was voluntary and accidental, she at last consented to give him an interview.

On entering the room, which had formerly been the family parlour, William was forcibly struck with the contrast it exhibited. Every object seemed

to swim before his sight, and it was some moments before he discovered Miss Coventry, who reclined upon a sofa at the farther end of the room. He advanced with a beating heart, and grasped the burning hand that was extended to meet him. He pressed it to his lips and wept, and muttered something incoherent of forgiveness and love. He looked doubtfully on Mary's face for an answer,—but her eye darted no reproach, and her lips uttered no reflection. A faint blush, that at this moment overspread her cheek, seemed a token of returning strength, and inspired him with confidence and hope. It was the last effort of nature,—and ere the blood could return to its fountain, that fountain had closed for ever. Death approached his victim under the disguise of sleep, and appeared divested of his usual pains and terrors.

William retired from this scene of unutterable anguish, and for a long period was overwhelmed with the deepest melancholy and remorse. But time gradually softened and subdued his sorrow, and I trust perfected his repentance. He is since married and wealthy, and is regarded by the world as an individual eminently respectable and happy. But, amidst all his comforts, there are moments when he would exchange his identity with the meanest slave that breathes, and regards himself as the murderer of Mary Coventry.—*J. M'D., in Blackwood's Magazine, 1817.*

ADAM BELL.

BY JAMES HOGG, THE "ETTRICK SHEPHERD."

THIS tale, which may be depended on as in every part true, is singular, from the circumstance of its being insolvable, either from the facts that have been discovered relating to it, or by reason ; for though events sometimes occur among mankind, which at the time seem inexplicable, yet there being always some individuals acquainted with the primary causes of these events, they seldom fail of being brought to light before all the actors in them, or their confidants, are removed from this state of existence. But the causes which produced the events here related have never been accounted for in this world ; even conjecture is left to wander in a labyrinth, unable to get hold of the thread that leads to the catastrophe.

Mr Bell was a gentleman of Annandale, in Dumfriesshire, in the south of Scotland, and proprietor of a considerable estate in that district, part of which he occupied himself. He lost his father when he was an infant, and his mother dying when he was about 20 years of age, left him the sole proprietor of the estate, besides a large sum of money at interest, for which he was indebted, in a great measure, to his mother's parsimony during his minority. His person was tall, comely, and athletic, and his whole delight was in warlike and violent exercises. He was the best horseman and marksman in the county, and valued himself particularly upon his skill in the broad sword. Of this he often boasted aloud, and regretted that there was not one in the county whose skill was in some degree equal to his own.

In the autumn of 1745, after being for several days busily and silently employed in preparing for his journey, he left his own house, and went to Edin-

burgh, giving at the same time such directions to his servants as indicated his intention of being absent for some time.

A few days after he had left his home, one morning, while his housekeeper was putting the house in order for the day, her master, as she thought, entered by the kitchen door, the other being bolted, and passed her in the middle of the floor. He was buttoned in his greatcoat, which was the same he had on when he went from home ; he likewise had the same hat on his head, and the same whip in his hand which he took with him. At sight of him she uttered a shriek, but recovering her surprise, instantly said to him, " You have not stayed so long from us, Sir." He made no reply, but went sullenly into his own room, without throwing off his greatcoat. After a pause of about five minutes, she followed him into the room. He was standing at his desk with his back towards her. She asked him if he wished to have a fire kindled, and afterwards if he was well enough ; but he still made no reply to any of these questions. She was astonished, and returned into the kitchen. After tarrying about other five minutes, he went out at the front door, it being then open, and walked deliberately towards the bank of the river Kinnel, which was deep and wooded, and in that he vanished from her sight. The woman ran out in the utmost consternation to acquaint the men who were servants belonging to the house ; and coming to one of the ploughmen, she told him that their master was come home, and had certainly lost his reason, for that he was wandering about the house and would not speak. The man loosed his horses

from the plough and came home, listened to the woman's relation, made her repeat it again and again, and then assured her that she was raving, for their master's horse was not in the stable, and of course he could not be come home. However, as she persisted in heraseveration with every appearance of sincerity, he went into the linn to see what was become of his mysterious master. He was neither to be seen nor heard of in all the country. It was then concluded that the house-keeper had seen an apparition, and that something had befallen their master ; but on consulting with some old people, skilled in those matters, they learned that when a "wraith," or apparition of a living person, appeared while the sun was up, instead of being a prelude of instant death, it prognosticated very long life ; and, moreover, that it could not possibly be a ghost that she had seen, for they always chose the night season for making their visits. In short, though it was the general topic of conversation among the servants and the people in the vicinity, no reasonable conclusion could be formed on the subject.

The most probable conjecture was, that as Mr Bell was known to be so fond of arms, and had left his home on the very day that Prince Charles Stuart and his Highlanders defeated General Hawley on Falkirk Muir, he had gone either with him or the Duke of Cumberland to the north. It was, however, afterwards ascertained, that he had never joined any of the armies. Week passed after week, and month after month, but no word of Mr Bell. A female cousin was his nearest living relation ; her husband took the management of his affairs ; and concluding that he had either joined the army, or drowned himself in the Kinnel, when he was seen go into the linn, made no more inquiries after him.

About this very time, a respectable

farmer, whose surname was M'Millan, and who resided in the neighbourhood of Musselburgh, happened to be in Edinburgh about some business. In the evening he called upon a friend who lived near Holyrood-house ; and being seized with an indisposition, they persuaded him to tarry with them all night. About the middle of the night he grew exceedingly ill, and not being able to find any rest or ease in his bed, imagined he would be the better of a walk. He put on his clothes, and, that he might not disturb the family, slipped quietly out at the back door, and walked in St Anthony's garden behind the house. The moon shone so bright, that it was almost as light as noonday, and he had scarcely taken a single turn, when he saw a tall man enter from the other side, buttoned in a drab-coloured greatcoat. It so happened, that at that time M'Millan stood in the shadow of the wall, and perceiving that the stranger did not observe him, a thought struck him that it would not be amiss to keep himself concealed, that he might see what the man was going to be about. He walked backwards and forwards for some time in apparent impatience, looking at his watch every minute, until at length another man came in by the same way, buttoned likewise in a great-coat, and having a bonnet on his head. He was remarkably stout made, but considerably lower in stature than the other. They exchanged only a single word ; then turning both about, they threw off their coats, drew their swords, and began a most desperate and well-contested combat.

The tall gentleman appeared to have the advantage. He constantly gained ground on the other, and drove him half round the division of the garden in which they fought. Each of them strove to fight with his back towards the moon, so that it might shine full in the face of his opponent ; and many rapid wheels were made for the purpose

of gaining this position. The engagement was long and obstinate, and by the desperate thrusts that were frequently aimed on both sides, it was evident that they meant one another's destruction. They came at length within a few yards of the place where M'Millan still stood concealed. They were both out of breath, and at that instant a small cloud chancing to overshadow the moon, one of them called out, "Hold, we cannot see." They uncovered their heads, wiped their faces, and as soon as the moon emerged from the cloud, each resumed his guard. Surely that was an awful pause! And short, indeed, was the stage between it and eternity with the one! The tall gentleman made a lounge at the other, who parried and returned it; and as the former sprung back to avoid the thrust, his foot slipped, and he stumbled forward towards his antagonist, who dexterously met his breast in the fall with the point of his sword, and ran him through the body. He made only one feeble convulsive struggle, as if attempting to rise, and expired almost instantaneously.

M'Millan was petrified with horror; but conceiving himself to be in a perilous situation, having stolen out of the house at that dead hour of the night, he had so much presence of mind as to hold his peace, and to keep from interfering in the smallest degree.

The surviving combatant wiped his sword with great composure;—put on his bonnet, covered the body with one of the greatcoats, took up the other, and departed. M'Millan returned quietly to his chamber without awaking any of the family. His pains were gone, but his mind was shocked and exceedingly perturbed; and after deliberating until morning, he determined to say nothing of the matter, and to make no living creature acquainted with what he had seen, thinking that suspicion would infallibly rest on him.

Accordingly, he kept his bed next morning, until his friend brought him the tidings that a gentleman had been murdered at the back of the house during the night. He then arose and examined the body, which was that of a young man, seemingly from the country, having brown hair, and fine manly features. He had neither letter, book, nor signature of any kind about him that could in the least lead to a discovery of who he was; only a common silver watch was found in his pocket, and an elegant sword was clasped in his cold bloody hand, which had an A. and B. engraved on the hilt. The sword had entered at his breast, and gone out at his back a little below the left shoulder. He had likewise received a slight wound on the sword arm.

The body was carried to the dead-room, where it lay for eight days, and though great numbers inspected it, yet none knew who or whence the deceased was, and he was at length buried among the strangers in Grayfriars churchyard.

Sixteen years elapsed before M'Millan mentioned to any person the circumstance of his having seen the duel, but at that period, being in Annandale receiving some sheep that he had bought, and chancing to hear of the astonishing circumstances of Bell's disappearance, he divulged the whole. The time, the description of his person, his clothes, and above all, the sword with the initials of his name engraved upon it, confirmed the fact beyond the smallest shadow of doubt that it was Mr Bell whom he had seen killed in the duel behind the Abbey. But who the person was that slew him, how the quarrel commenced, or who it was that appeared to his housekeeper, remains to this day a profound secret, and is likely to remain so, until that day when every deed of darkness shall be brought to light.

Some have even ventured to blame

M'Millan for the whole, on account of his long concealment of facts, and likewise in consideration of his uncommon bodily strength and daring disposition, he being one of the boldest and most enterprising men of the age in which he lived ; but all who knew

him despised such insinuations, and declared them to be entirely inconsistent with his character, which was most honourable and disinterested ; and besides, his tale has every appearance of truth. “*Pluris est oculatus testis unus quam auriti decem.*”

MAUNS' STANE; OR, MINE HOST'S TALE.

IN the latter end of the autumn of —, I set out by myself on an excursion over the northern part of Scotland ; and, during that time, my chief amusement was to observe the little changes of manners, language, &c., in the different districts. After having viewed, on my return, the principal curiosities in Buchan, I made a little alehouse, or “public,” my head-quarters for the night. Having discussed my supper in solitude, I called up mine host to enable me to discuss my bottle, and to give me a statistical account of the country around me. Seated in the “blue” end, and well supplied with the homely but satisfying luxuries which the place afforded, I was in an excellent mood for enjoying the communicativeness of my landlord ; and, after speaking about the cave at Slaines, the state of the crop, and the neighbouring franklins, edged him, by degrees, to speak about the Abbey of Deer, an interesting ruin which I had examined in the course of the day, formerly the stronghold of the once powerful family of Cummin.

“It's dootless a bonny place about the Abbey,” said he, “but naething like what it was when the great Sir James the Rose cam to hide i' the Buchan woods, wi' a' the Grahames rampagin' at his tail, whilk you that's a beuk learned man 'ill hae read o' ; an' maybe ye'll hae heard o' the saugh-

en bush where he forgathered wi' his joe ; or aiblins ye may have seen't, for it's standing yet just at the corner o' gaukit Jamie Jamieson's peat-stack. Ay, ay, the abbey was a brave place ance ; but a' thing, ye ken, comes till an end.” So saying, he nodded to me, and brought his glass to an end.

“This place, then, must have been famed in days of yore, my friend ?”

“Ye may tak my word for that,” said he. “‘Od, it *was* a place ! Sic a sight o' fechtin’ as they had about it ! But gin ye'll gang up the trap-stair to the laft, an’ open Jenny’s kist, ye'll see sic a story about it, prented by ane o’ your learned Aberdeen’s foul, Maister Keith, I think ; she coft it in Aberdeen for twal pennies, lang ago, an’ battered it to the lid o’ her kist. But gang up the stair canny, for fear that you should wauken her, puir thing ;—or, bide, I’ll just wauken Jamie Fleep, an’ gar him help me down wi’t, for our stair’s no just that canny for them ‘t’s no acquaint wi’t, let alone a frail man wi’ your infirmity.”

I assured him that I would neither disturb the young lady’s slumber, nor Jamie Fleep’s, and begged him to give me as much information as he could about this castle.

“Weel, wishin’ your gude health again.—Our minister ance said, that Soloman’s Temple was a’ in ruins, wi’

whin bushes, an' broom an' thistles growin' ower the bonny carved wark an' the cedar wa's, just like our ain Abbey. Noo, I judge that the Abbey o' Deer was just the marrow o't, or the minister wadna hae said that. But when it was biggit, Lord kens, for I dinna. It was just as you see it, lang afore your honour was born ; an' aiblins, as the by-word says, may be sae after ye're hanged. But that's neither here nor there. The Cummins o' Buchan were a dour and surly race ; and, for a fearfu' time, nane near han' nor far awa could ding them, an' yet mony a nee tried it. The fouk on their ain lan' likit them weel enough ; but the Crawfords, an' the Grahames, an' the Mars, an' the Lovats, were aye trying to comb them against the hair, an' mony a weary kempin' had they wi' them ; but, some way or ither, they could never ding them ; an' fouk said that they gaed and learned the black art frae the Pope o' Room, wha, I mysel heard the minister say, had aye a colleague wi' the Auld Chiel. I dinna ken fou it was ; in the tail o' the day, the hale country rase up against them, an' besieged them in the Abbey o' Deer. Ye'll see, my frien' [by this time mine host considered me as one of his cronies], tho' we ca' it the Abbey, it had naething to do wi' Papistry ; na, na, no sae bad as a' that either, but just a noble's castle, where they keepit sodgers gaun about in airn an' scarlet, wi' their swords an' guns, an' begnets, an' sentry-boxes, like the local militia in the barracks o' Aberdeen.

"Weel, ye see, they surrounded the castle, an' lang did they besiege it ; but there was a vast o' meat in the castle, an' the Buchan foul fought like the vera deil. They took their horse through a miscellaneous passage, half a mile long, aneath the hill o' Saplinbrae, an' watered them in the burn o' Pulmer. But a' wadna do ; they took the castle at last, and a terrible slaughter they

made amo' them ; but they were sair disappointed in ae partic'ler, for Cummin's fouk sank a' their goud an' siller in a draw-wall, an' syne filled it up wi' stanes. They gat naething in the way of spulzie to speak o' ; sae out o' spite they dang doon the castle, an' it's never been biggit to this day. But the Cummins were no sae bad as the Lairds o' Federat, after a'."

"And who were these Federats ?" I inquired.

"The Lairds o' Federat ?" said he, moistening his mouth again as a preamble to his oration. "Troth, frae their deeds, aye would maist think that they had a drap o' the deil's blude, like the pyets. Gin a' tales be true, they hae the warmest place at his bink this vera minute. I dinna ken vera muckle about them though, but the auldest fouk said they were just byous wi' cruelty. Mony a gude man did they hing up i' their ha', just for their ain sport ; ye'll see the ring to the fore yet in the roof o't. Did ye ever hear o' Mauns' Stane, neebour ?"

"Mauns' what ?" said I.

"Ou, Mauns' Stane. But it's no likely. Ye see it was just a queer clump o' a roun'-about heathen, waghtin' maybe twa tons or thereby. It wasna like ony o' the stanes in our countra, an' it was as roun' as a fit-ba' ; I'm sure it wad ding Professor Couplan himsel to tell what way it cam there. Noo, fouk aye thought there was something uncanny about it, an' some gaed the length o' saying, that the deil used to bake ginshbread upon't ; and, as sure as ye're sitting there, frien', there was knuckle-marks upon't, for my ain father has seen them as aften as I have taes an' fingers. Aweel, ye see, Mauns Crawford, the last o' the Lairds o' Federat, an' the deil had coost out (maybe because the Laird was just as wicked an' as clever as he was himself), an' ye perceive the evileane wantit to play him a trick. Noo, Mauns Crawford was ae

day lookin' ower his castle wa', and he saw a stalwart carl, in black claes, ridin' up the loanin'. He stopped at this chuckie o' a stane, an', loutin' himsel, he took it up in his arms, and lifted it three times to his saddle-bow, an' syne he rade awa out o' sight, never comin' near the castle, as Mauns thought he would hae done. 'Noo,' says the baron till himsel, says he, 'I didna think that there was ony ane in a' the land that could hae played sic a ploy; but deil fetch me if I dinna lift it as weel as he did.' Sae aff he gaed, for there was na sic a man for birr in a' the countra, an' he kent it as weel, for he never met wi' his match. Weel, he tried, and tugged, and better than tugged at the stane, but he coudna mudge it ava; an', when he looked about, he saw a man at his elbuck, a' smeared wi' smiddy-coom, snightern' an' laughin' at him. The Laird d---d him, an' bade him lift it, whilk he did as gin't had been a little pinnin. The Laird was like to burst wi' rage at being fickleld by sic a hag-ma-hush carle, and he took to the stane in a fury, and lifted it till his knee; but the weight o't amaist ground his banes to smash. He held the stane till his een-strings crackit, when he was as blin' as a moudiwort. He was blin' till the day o' his death,—that's to say, if ever he died, for there were queer sayings about it—vera queer! vera queer! The stane was ca'd Mauns' Stane ever after; an' it was no thought that canny to be near it after gloaming; for what says the psalm—hem!—I mean the sang—

"Tween Ennetbutts an' Mauns' Stane
Ilka night there walks ane.

"There never was a chief of the family after; the men were scattered, an' the castle demolished. The doo and the hoodie craw nestle i' their towers, and the hare maks her form on their grassy hearthstane."

"Is this stone still to be seen?"

"Ou na. Ye see, it was just upon Johnie Forbes's craft, an' foul cam far an' near to leuk at it, an' trampit down a' the puir cottar body's corn; sae he houkit a hole just aside it, an' tumbled it intil't: by that means naebody sees't noo, but its weel kent that it's there, for they're livin' yet wha've seen it."

"But the well at the Abbey—did no one feel a desire to enrich himself with the gold and silver buried there?"

"Hoot, ay; mony a ane tried to find out whaur it was, and, for that matter, I've maybe done as foolish a thing mysel; but nane ever made it out. There was a scholar, like yoursel, that gaed ae night down to the Abbey, an', ye see, he summoned up the deil."

"The deuce he did!" said I.

"Weel, weel, the *deuce*, gin ye like it better," said he. "An' he was gaun to question him where the treasure was, but he had eneugh to do to get him laid without deaving him wi' questions, for a' the deils cam about him, like bees bizzin' out o' a byke. He never coursed the fright he gat, but cried out, 'Help! help!' till his very enemy wad hae been wae to see him; and sae he cried till he died, which was no that lang after. Fouk sudna meddle wi' sic ploys!"

"Most wonderful! And do you believe that Beelzebub actually appeared to him?"

"Believe it! What for no?" said he, consequentially tapping the lid of his snuff-horn. "Didna my ain father see the evil ane i' the schule o' Auld Deer?"

"Indeed!"

"Weel I wot he did that. A wheen idle callants, when the dominie was out at his twal-hours, read the Lord's Prayer backlans, an' raised him, but coudna lay him again; for he threepit ower them that he wadna gang awa unless he gat ane o' them wi' him. Ye may be sure this put them in an awfu'

swither. They were a' squallin', an' crawlin', and sprawlin' amo' the couples to get out o' his grips. Ane o' them gat out an' tauld the maister about it ; an' when he cam down, the melted lead was rinnin' aff the roof o' the house wi' the heat ; sae, flingin' to the Black Thief a young bit kitten o' the schule-mistress's, he sank through the floor wi' an awsome roar. I mysel have heard the mistress misca'in' her man about offering up the puir thing,

baith saul and body, to Baal. But, troth, I'm no clear to speak o' the like o' this at sic a time o' night ; sae, if your honour be na for anither jug, I'll e'en wus you a gude night, for its wearin' late, an' I maun awa' to Skippyfair i' the mornin'."

I assented to this, and quickly lost in sleep the remembrance of all these tales of the olden time.—*Aberdeen Censor, 1825.*

THE FREEBOOTER OF LOCHABER.

BY SIR THOMAS DICK LAUDER.

TOWARDS the end of the seventeenth century, there lived a certain notorious freebooter, in the county of Moray, a native of Lochaber, of the name of Cameron, but who was better known by his cognomen of *Padrig Mac-an-Ts'agairt*, which signifies, “Peter, the Priest’s Son.” Numerous were the “creachs,” or robberies of cattle on a great scale, driven by him from Strathspey. But he did not confine his depredations to that country; for, some time between the years 1690 and 1695, he made a clean sweep of the cattle from the rich pastures of the Aird, the territory of the Frasers. That he might put his pursuers on a wrong scent, he did not go directly towards Lochaber, but, crossing the river Ness at Lochend, he struck over the mountains of Strathnairn and Strathdearn, and ultimately encamped behind a hill above Duthel, called, from a copious spring on its summit, *Cairn-an-Sh'uaran*, or the Well Hill. But, notwithstanding all his precautions, the celebrated Simon Lord Lovat, then chief of the Frasers, discovered his track, and despatched a special messenger to his father-in-law,

Sir Ludovick Grant of Grant, begging his aid in apprehending Mac-an-Ts’agairt, and recovering the cattle.

It so happened that there lived at this time, on the laird of Grant’s ground, a man also called Cameron, surnamed Mugach More, of great strength and undaunted courage; he had six sons and a stepson, whom his wife, formerly a woman of light character, had before her marriage with Mugach, and, as they were all brave, Sir Ludovick applied to them to undertake the recapture of the cattle. Sir Ludovic was not mistaken in the man. The Mugach no sooner received his orders, than he armed himself and his little band, and went in quest of the freebooter, whom he found in the act of cooking a dinner from part of the spoil. The Mugach called on Padrig and his men to surrender, and they, though numerous, dreading the well-known prowess of their adversary, fled to the opposite hills, their chief threatening bloody vengeance as he went. The Mugach drove the cattle to a place of safety, and watched them till their owners came to recover them.

Padrig did not utter his threats without the fullest intention of carrying them into effect. In the latter end of the following spring, he visited Strathspey with a strong party, and waylaid the Mugach, as he and his sons were returning from working at a small patch of land he had on the brow of a hill, about half-a-mile above his house. Padrig and his party concealed themselves in a thick covert of underwood, through which they knew that the Mugach and his sons must pass; but seeing their intended victims well-armed, the cowardly assassins lay still in their hiding-place, and allowed them to pass, with the intention of taking a more favourable opportunity for their purpose. That very night they surprised and murdered two of the sons, who, being married, lived in separate houses, at some distance from their father's; and, having thus executed so much of their diabolical purpose, they surrounded the Mugach's cottage.

No sooner was his dwelling attacked, than the brave Mugach, immediately guessing who the assailants were, made the best arrangements for defence that time and circumstances permitted. The door was the first point attempted; but it was strong, and he and his four sons placed themselves behind it, determined to do bloody execution the moment it should be forced. Whilst thus engaged, the Mugach was startled by a noise above the rafters, and, looking up, he perceived, in the obscurity, the figure of a man half through a hole in the wattled roof. Eager to despatch his foe as he entered, he sprang upon a table, plunged his sword into his body, and down fell—his stepson, whom he had ever loved and cherished as one of his own children! The youth had been cutting his way through the roof, with the intention of attacking Padrig from above, and so creating a diversion in favour of those who were defending the door. The brave young man lived no

longer than to say, "Dear father, I fear you have killed me!"

For a moment the Mugach stood petrified with horror and grief, but rage soon usurped the place of both. "Let me open the door!" he cried, "and revenge his death, by drenching my sword in the blood of the villain!" His sons clung around him, to prevent what they conceived to be madness, and a strong struggle ensued between desperate bravery and filial duty; whilst the Mugach's wife stood gazing on the corpse of her first-born son, in an agony of contending passions, being ignorant from all she had witnessed but that the young man's death had been wilfully wrought by her husband. "Hast thou forgotten our former days?" cried the wily Padrig, who saw the whole scene through a crevice in the door. "How often hast thou undone thy door to me, and wilt thou not open it now, to give me way to punish him who has, but this moment, so foully slain thy beloved son?" Ancient recollections, and present affliction, conspired to twist her to his purpose. The struggle and altercation between the Mugach and his sons still continued. A frenzy seized on the unhappy woman; she flew to the door, undid the bolt, and Padrig and his assassins rushed in.

The infuriated Mugach no sooner beheld his enemy enter, than he sprang at him like a tiger, grasped him by the throat, and dashed him to the ground. Already was his vigorous sword-arm drawn back, and his broad claymore was about to find a passage to the traitor's heart, when his faithless wife, coming behind him, threw over it a large canvas winnowing-sheet, and, before he could extricate the blade from the numerous folds, Padrig's weapon was reeking in the best heart's-blood of the bravest Highlander that Strathspey could boast of. His four sons, who had witnessed their mother's treachery, were paralyzed. The unfortunate woman her-

self, too, stood stupefied and appalled. But she was quickly recalled to her senses by the active clash of the swords of Padrig and his men. "Oh, my sons, my sons!" she cried; "spare my boys!" But the tempter needed her services no longer,—she had done his work. She was spurned to the ground and trampled under foot by those who soon strewed the bloody floor around her with the lifeless corpses of her brave sons.

Exulting in the full success of this expedition of vengeance, Mac-an-Ts'a-gairt beheaded the bodies, and piled the heads in a heap on an oblong hill that runs parallel to the road on the east side of Carr Bridge, from which it is called *Tom-nan-Cean*, the Hill of the Heads. Scarcely was he beyond the reach of danger, than his butchery was known at the Castle Grant, and Sir Ludovick immediately offered a great reward for his apprehension; but Padrig, who had anticipated some such thing, fled to Ireland, where he remained for seven years. But the restlessness of the murderer is well known, and Padrig felt it in all its horrors. Leaving his Irish retreat, he returned to Lochaber. By a strange accident, a certain Mungo Grant, of Muckrach, having had his cattle and horses carried away by some thieves from that quarter, pursued them hot foot, recovered them, and was on his way returning with them, when, to his astonishment, he met Padrig Mac-an-Ts'a-gairt, quite alone in a narrow pass, on the borders of his native country. Mungo instantly seized and made a prisoner of him. But his progress with his beasts was tedious; and as he was entering Strathspey at *Lag-na-caillich*, about a mile to the westward of Aviemore, he espied twelve desperate men, who, taking advantage of his slow march, had crossed the hills to gain the pass before him, for the purpose of rescuing Padrig. But Mungo was not to be daunted. Seeing them occupying

the road in his front, he grasped his prisoner with one hand, and brandishing his dirk with the other, he advanced in the midst of his people and animals, swearing potently that the first motion at an attempt at rescue by any one of them should be the signal for his dirk to drink the life's-blood of Padrig Mac-an-Ts'a-gairt. They were so intimidated by his boldness that they allowed him to pass without assault, and left their friend to his fate. Padrig was forthwith carried to Castle Grant. But the remembrance of the Mugach's murder had been by this time much obliterated by many events little less strange, and the laird, unwilling to be troubled with the matter, ordered Mungo and his prisoner away.

Disappointed and mortified, Mungo and his party were returning with their captive, discussing, as they went, what they had best do with him. "A fine reward we have had for all our trouble!" said one. "The laird may catch the next thief her nainsel, for Donald!" said another. "Let's turn him loose!" said a third. "Ay, ay," said a fourth; "what for wud we be plaguing oursels more wi' him?" "Yes, yes! brave, generous men!" said Padrig, roused by a sudden hope of life from the moody dream of the gallows-tree in which he had been plunged, whilst he was courting his mournful muse to compose his own lament, that he might die with an effect striking, as all the events of his life had been. "Yes, brave men, free me from these bonds! It is unworthy of Strathspey men,—it is unworthy of Grants to triumph over a fallen foe! Those whom I killed were no clansmen of yours, but recreant Camerons, who betrayed a Cameron! Let me go free, and that reward of which you have been disappointed shall be quadrupled for sparing my life." Such words as these, operating on minds so much prepared to receive them favourably, had well-nigh worked their purpose. But

"No!" said Muckrach sternly, "it shall never be said that a murderer escaped from my hands. Besides, it was just so that he fairly spake the Mugach's false wife. But did he spare her sons on that account? If ye let him go, my men, the fate of the Mugach may be ours; for what bravery can stand against treachery and assassination?" This opened an entirely new view of the question to Padrig's rude guards, and the result of the conference was that they resolved to take him to Inverness, and to deliver him up to the sheriff.

As they were pursuing their way up the south side of the river Dulnan, the hill of *Tom-nan-Cean* appeared on that opposite to them. At sight of it the whole circumstances of Padrig's atrocious deed came fresh into their minds. It seemed to cry on them for justice, and with one impulse they shouted out, "Let him die on the spot where

he did the bloody act!" Without a moment's farther delay, they determined to execute their new resolution. But on their way across the plain, they happened to observe a large fir tree, with a thick horizontal branch growing at right angles from the trunk, and of a sufficient height from the ground to suit their purpose; and doubting if they might find so convenient a gallows where they were going, they at once determined that here Padrig should finish his mortal career. The neighbouring birch thicket supplied them with materials for making a withe; and whilst they were twisting it, Padrig burst forth in a flood of Gaelic verse, which his mind had been accumulating by the way. His song and the twig rope that was to terminate his existence were spun out and finished at the same moment, and he was instantly elevated to a height equally beyond his ambition and his hopes.

AN HOUR IN THE MANSE.

BY PROFESSOR WILSON.

IN a few weeks the annual sacrament of the Lord's Supper was to be administered in the parish of Deanside; and the minister, venerable in old age, of authority by the power of his talents and learning, almost feared for his sanctity, yet withal beloved for gentleness and compassion that had never been found wanting, when required either by the misfortunes or errors of any of his flock, had delivered for several successive Sabbaths, to full congregations, sermons on the proper preparation of communicants in that awful ordinance. The old man was a follower of Calvin; and many, who had listened to him with a resolution in

their hearts to approach the table of the Redeemer, felt so awe-stricken and awakened at the conclusion of his exhortations, that they gave their souls another year to meditate on what they had heard, and by a pure and humble course of life, to render themselves less unworthy to partake the mysterious and holy bread and wine.

The good old man received in the manse, for a couple of hours every evening, such of his parishioners as came to signify their wish to partake of the sacrament; and it was then noted, that, though he in nowise departed, in his conversation with them at such times, from the spirit of those doctrines

which he had delivered from the pulpit, yet his manner was milder, and more soothing, and full of encouragement; so that many who went to him almost with quaking hearts, departed in tranquillity and peace, and looked forward to that most impressive and solemn act of the Christian faith with calm and glad anticipation. The old man thought, truly and justly, that few, if any, would come to the manse, after having heard him in the kirk, without due and deep reflection; and therefore, though he allowed none to pass through his hands without strict examination, he spoke to them all benignly, and with that sort of paternal pity which a religious man, about to leave this life, feels towards all his brethren of mankind, who are entering upon, or engaged in, its scenes of agitation, trouble, and danger.

On one of those evenings, the servant showed into the minister's study a tall, bold-looking, dark-visaged man, in the prime of life, who, with little of the usual courtesy, advanced into the middle of the room, and somewhat abruptly declared the sacred purpose of his visit. But before he could receive a reply, he looked around and before him; and there was something so solemn in the old minister's appearance, as he sat like a spirit, with his unclouded eyes fixed upon the intruder, that that person's countenance fell, and his heart was involuntarily knocking against his side. An old large Bible, the same that he read from in the pulpit, was lying open before him. One glimmering candle showed his beautiful and silvery locks falling over his temples, as his head half stooped over the sacred page; a dead silence was in the room dedicated to meditation and prayer; the old man, it was known, had for some time felt himself to be dying, and had spoken of the sacrament of this summer as the last he could ever hope to administer; so that altogether, in the silence, the dimness, the sanctity, the

unwofldliness of the time, the place, and the being before him, the visitor stood like one abashed and appalled; and bowing more reverently, or at least respectfully, he said, with a quivering voice, "Sir, I come for your sanction to be admitted to the table of our Lord."

The minister motioned to him with his hand to sit down; and it was a relief to the trembling man to do so, for he was in the presence of one who, he felt, saw into his heart. A sudden change from hardihood to terror took place within his dark nature; he wished himself out of the insupportable sanctity of that breathless room; and a remorse, that had hitherto slept, or been drowned within him, now clutched his heart-strings, as if with an alternate grasp of frost and fire, and made his knees knock against each other where he sat, and his face pale as ashes.

"Norman Adams, saidst thou that thou wilt take into that hand, and put into those lips, the symbol of the blood that was shed for sinners, and of the body that bowed on the cross, and then gave up the ghost? If so, let us speak together, even as if thou wert communing with thine own heart. Never again may I join in that sacrament, for the hour of my departure is at hand. Say, wilt thou eat and drink death to thine immortal soul?"

The terrified man found strength to rise from his seat, and, staggering towards the door, said, "Pardon, forgive me!—I am not worthy."

"It is not I who can pardon, Norman. That power lies not with man; but sit down—you are deadly pale—and though, I fear, an ill-living and a dissolute man, greater sinners have repented and been saved. Approach not now the table of the Lord, but confess all your sins before Him in the silence of your own house, and upon your naked knees on the stone-floor every morning and every night; and if this you do

faithfully, humbly, and with a contrite heart, come to me again when the sacrament is over, and I will speak words of comfort to you (if then I am able to speak)—if, Norman, it should be on my deathbed. This will I do for the sake of thy soul, and for the sake of thy father, Norman, whom my soul loved, and who was a support to me in my ministry for many long, long years, even for two score and ten, for we were at school together ; and had your father been living now, he would, like myself, have this very day finished his eighty-fifth year. I send you not from me in anger, but in pity and love. Go, my son, and this very night begin your repentance, for if that face speak the truth, your heart must be sorely charged.”

Just as the old man ceased speaking, and before the humble, or at least affrighted culprit had risen to go, another visitor of a very different kind was shown into the room—a young, beautiful girl, almost shrouded in her cloak, with a sweet pale face, on which sadness seemed in vain to strive with the natural expression of the happiness of youth.

“ Mary Simpson,” said the kind old man, as she stood with a timid courtesy near the door, “ Mary Simpson, approach, and receive from my hands the token for which thou comest. Well dost thou know the history of thy Saviour’s life, and rejoicest in the life and immortality brought to light by the gospel. Young and guileless, Mary, art thou ; and dim as my memory now is of many things, yet do I well remember the evening, when first beside my knee, thou heardst read how the Divine Infant was laid in a manger, how the wise men from the East came to the place of His nativity, and how the angels were heard singing in the fields of Bethlehem all the night long.”

Alas ! every word that had thus been uttered sent a pang into the poor crea-

ture’s heart, and, without lifting her eyes from the floor, and in a voice more faint and hollow than belonged to one so young, she said, “ O sir ! I come not as an intending communicant ; yet the Lord my God knows that I am rather miserable than guilty, and He will not suffer my soul to perish, though a baby is now within me, the child of guilt, and sin, and horror. This, my shame, come I to tell you ; but for the father of my babe unborn, cruel though he has been to me,—oh ! cruel, cruel, indeed,—yet shall his name go down with me in silence to the grave. I must not, must not breathe his name in mortal ears ; but I have looked round me in the wide moor, and when nothing that could understand was by, nothing living but birds, and bees, and the sheep I was herding, often have I whispered his name in my prayers, and beseeched God and Jesus to forgive him all his sins.”

At these words, of which the passionate utterance seemed to relieve her heart, and before the pitying and bewildered old man could reply, Mary Simpson raised her eyes from the floor, and fearing to meet the face of the minister, which had heretofore never shone upon her but with smiles, and of which the expected frown was to her altogether insupportable, she turned them wildly round the room, as if for a dark resting-place, and beheld Norman Adams rooted to his seat, leaning towards her with his white, ghastly countenance, and his eyes starting from their sockets, seemingly in wrath, agony, fear, and remorse. That terrible face struck poor Mary to the heart, and she sank against the wall, and slipped down, shuddering, upon a chair.

“ Norman Adams, I am old and weak, but do you put your arm round that poor lost creature, and keep her from falling down on the hard floor. I hear it is a stormy night, and she has walked some miles hither ; no wonder

she is overcome. You have heard her confession, but it was not meant for your ear ; so, till I see you again, say nothing of what you have now heard."

" O sir ! a cup of water, for my blood is either leaving my heart altogether, or it is drowning it. Your voice, sir, is going far, far away from me, and I am sinking down. Oh, hold me !—hold me up ! Is it a pit into which I am falling ?—Saw I not Norman Adams ?—Where is he now ?"

The poor maiden did not fall off the chair, although Norman Adams supported her not ; but her head lay back against the wall, and a sigh, long and dismal, burst from her bosom, that deeply affected the old man's heart, but struck that of the speechless and motionless sinner, like the first toll of the prison bell that warns the felon to leave his cell and come forth to execution.

The minister fixed a stern eye upon Norman, for, from the poor girl's unconscious words, it was plain that he was the guilty wretch who had wrought all this misery. " You knew, did you not, that she had neither father nor mother, sister nor brother, scarcely one relation on earth to care for or watch over her ; and yet you have used her so ? If her beauty was a temptation unto you, did not the sweet child's innocence touch your hard and selfish heart with pity ? or her guilt and grief must surely now wring it with remorse. Look on her—white, cold, breathless, still as a corpse ; and yet, thou bold bad man, thy footsteps would have approached the table of thy Lord ! "

The child now partly awoke from her swoon, and her dim opening eyes met those of Norman Adams. She shut them with a shudder, and said, sickly and with a quivering voice, " Oh spare, spare me, Norman ! Are we again in that dark, fearful wood ? Tremble not for your life on earth, Norman, for never, never will I tell to

mortal ears that terrible secret ; but spare me, spare me, else our Saviour, with all His mercy, will never pardon your unrelenting soul. These are cruel-looking eyes ; you will not surely murder poor Mary Simpson, unhappy as she is, and must for ever be—yet life is sweet ! She beseeches you on her knees to spare her life !"—and, in the intense fear of phantasy, the poor creature struggled off the chair, and fell down indeed in a heap at his feet.

" Canst thou indeed be the son of old Norman Adams, the industrious, the temperate, the mild, and the pious—who so often sat in this very room which thy presence has now polluted, and spake with me on the mysteries of life and of death ? Foul ravisher, what stayed thy hand from the murder of that child, when there were none near to hear her shrieks in the dark solitude of the great pine-wood ?"

Norman Adams smote his heart and fell down too on his knees beside the poor ruined orphan. He put his arm round her, and, raising her from the floor, said, " No, no, my sin is great, too great for Heaven's forgiveness ; but, oh sir ! say not—say not that I would have murdered her ; for, savage as my crime was, yet may God judge me less terribly than if I had taken her life."

In a little while they were both seated with some composure, and silence was in the room. No one spoke, and the old grayhaired man sat with his eyes fixed, without reading, on the open Bible. At last he broke silence with these words out of Isaiah, that seemed to have forced themselves on his heedless eyes :—" Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow : though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Mary Simpson wept aloud at these words, and seemed to forget her own wrongs and grief in commiseration of the agonies of remorse and fear that

were now plainly preying on the soul of the guilty man. "I forgive you, Norman, and will soon be out of the way, no longer to anger you with the sight of me." Then, fixing her streaming eyes on the minister, she besought him not to be the means of bringing him to punishment and a shameful death, for that he might repent, and live to be a good man and respected in the parish ; but that she was a poor orphan for whom few cared, and who, when dead, would have but a small funeral.

"I will deliver myself up into the hands of justice," said the offender, "for I do not deserve to live. Mine was an inhuman crime, and let a violent and shameful death be my doom."

The orphan girl now stood up as if her strength had been restored, and stretching out her hands passionately, with a flow of most affecting and beautiful language, inspired by a meek, single, and sinless heart that could not bear the thought of utter degradation and wretchedness befalling any one of the rational children of God, implored and beseeched the old man to comfort the sinner before them, and promise that the dark transaction of guilt should never leave the concealment of their own three hearts. "Did he not save the lives of two brothers once who were drowning in that black mossy loch, when their own kindred, at work among the hay, feared the deep sullen water, and all stood aloof shuddering and shaking, till Norman Adams leapt in to their rescue, and drew them by the dripping hair to the shore, and then lay down beside them on the heather as like to death as themselves? I myself saw it done; I myself heard their mother call down the blessing of God on Norman's head, and then all the haymakers knelt down and prayed. When you, on the Sabbath, returned thanks to God for that they were saved, oh! kind sir, did you not name, in the

full kirk, him who, under Providence, did deliver them from death, and who, you said, had thus showed himself to be a Christian indeed? May his sin against me be forgotten, for the sake of those two drowning boys, and their mother, who blesses his name unto this day."

From a few questions solemnly asked, and solemnly answered, the minister found that Norman Adams had been won by the beauty and loveliness of this poor orphan shepherdess, as he had sometimes spoken to her when sitting on the hill-side with her flock, but that pride had prevented him from ever thinking of her in marriage. It appeared that he had also been falsely informed, by a youth whom Mary disliked for his brutal and gross manners, that she was not the innocent girl that her seeming simplicity denoted. On returning from a festive meeting, where this abject person had made many mean insinuations against her virtue, Norman Adams met her returning to her master's house, in the dusk of the evening, on the footpath leading through a lonely wood ; and, though his crime was of the deepest dye, it seemed to the minister of the religion of mercy, that by repentance, and belief in the atonement that had once been made for sinners, he, too, might perhaps hope for forgiveness at the throne of God.

"I warned you, miserable man, of the fatal nature of sin, when first it brought a trouble over your countenance, and broke in upon the peaceful integrity of your life. Was not the silence of the night often terrible to you, when you were alone in the moors, and the whisper of your own conscience told you, that every wicked thought was sacrilege to your father's dust? Step by step, and almost imperceptibly, perhaps, did you advance upon the road that leadeth to destruction ; but look back now, and what a long dark journey have you taken, standing, as you are, on the

brink of everlasting death ! Once you were kind, gentle, generous, manly, and free ; but you trusted to the deceitfulness of your own heart ; you estranged yourself from the house of the God of your fathers ; and what has your nature done for you at last, but sunk you into a wretch—savage, selfish, cruel, cowardly, and in good truth a slave ? A felon are you, and forfeited to the hangman's hands. Look on that poor innocent child, and think what is man without God. What would you give now, if the last three years of your reckless life had been passed in a dungeon dug deep into the earth, with hunger and thirst gnawing at your heart, and bent down under a cart-load of chains ? Yet look not so ghastly, for I condemn you not utterly ; nor, though I know your guilt, can I know what good may yet be left uncorrupted and unextinguished in your soul. Kneel not to me, Norman ; fasten not so your eyes upon me ; lift them upwards, and then turn them in upon your own heart, for the dreadful reckoning is between it and God."

Mary Simpson had now recovered all her strength, and she knelt down by the side of the groaner. Deep was the pity she now felt for him, who to her had shown no pity ; she did not refuse to lay her light arm tenderly upon his neck. Often had she prayed to God to save his soul, even among her rueful sobs of shame in the solitary glens ; and now that she beheld his sin punished with a remorse more than he could bear, the orphan would have willingly died to avert from his prostrate head the wrath of the Almighty.

The old man wept at the sight of so much innocence, and so much guilt, kneeling together before God, in strange union and fellowship of a common being. With his own fatherly arms he lifted up the orphan from her knees, and said, " Mary Simpson, my sweet and innocent Mary Simpson, for inno-

cent thou art, the elders will give thee a token, that will, on Sabbath-day, admit thee (not for the first time, though so young) to the communion-table. Fear not to approach it ; look at me, and on my face, when I bless the elements, and be thou strong in the strength of the Lord. Norman Adams, return to your home. Go into the chamber where your father died. Let your knees wear out the part of the floor on which he kneeled. It is somewhat-worn already ; you have seen the mark of your father's knees. Who knows, but that pardon and peace may descend from Heaven upon such a sinner as thou ? On none such as thou have mine eyes ever looked, in knowledge, among all those who have lived and died under my care, for three generations. But great is the unknown guilt that may be hidden even in the churchyard of a small quiet parish like this. Dost thou feel as if God-forsaken ? Or, oh ! say it unto me, canst thou, my poor son, dare to hope for repentance ?"

The pitiful tone of the old man's trembling voice, and the motion of his shaking and withered hands, as he lifted them up almost in an attitude of benediction, completed the prostration of that sinner's spirit. All his better nature, which had too long been oppressed under scorn of holy ordinances, and the coldness of infidelity, and the selfishness of lawless desires that insensibly hardened the heart they do not dissolve, now struggled to rise up and respect its rights. " When I remember what I once was, I can hope—when I think what I now am, I only, only fear."

A storm of rain and wind had come on, and Mary Simpson slept in the manse that night. On the ensuing Sabbath she partook of the sacrament. A woeful illness fell upon Norman Adams ; and then for a long time no one saw him, or knew where he had gone. It was said that he was in a dis-

tant city, and that he was a miserable creature, that never again could look upon the sun. But it was otherwise ordered. He returned to his farm, greatly changed in face and person, but even yet more changed in spirit.

The old minister had more days allotted to him than he had thought, and was not taken away for some

summers. Before he died, he had reason to know that Norman Adams had repented in tears of blood, in thoughts of faith, and in deeds of charity; and he did not fear to admit him, too, in good time, to the holy ordinance, along with Mary Simpson, then his wife, and the mother of his children.

THE WARDEN OF THE MARCHES:

A TRADITIONARY STORY OF ANNANDALE.

THE predatory incursions of the Scots and English borderers, on each other's territories, are known to every one in the least acquainted with either the written or traditional history of his country. These were sometimes made by armed and numerous bodies, and it was not uncommon for a band of marauders to take advantage of a thick fog or a dark night for plundering or driving away the cattle, with which they soon escaped over the border, where they were generally secure. Such incursions were so frequent and distressing to the peaceable and well-disposed inhabitants that they complained loudly to their respective governments; in consequence of which some one of the powerful nobles residing on the borders was invested with authority to suppress these depredations, under the title of Warden of the Marches. His duty was to protect the frontier, and alarm the country by firing the beacons which were placed on the heights, where they could be seen at a great distance, as a warning to the people to drive away their cattle, and, collecting in a body, either to repel or pursue the invaders, as circumstances might require. The wardens also possessed a discretionary power in such

matters as came under their jurisdiction. The proper discharge of this important trust required vigilance, courage, and fidelity, but it was sometimes committed to improper hands, and consequently the duty was very improperly performed.

In the reign of James V. one of these wardens was Sir John Charteris of Amisfield, near Dumfries, a brave but haughty man, who sometimes forgot his important trust so far as to sacrifice his public duties to his private interests.

George Maxwell was a young and respectable farmer in Annandale, who had frequently been active in repressing the petty incursions to which that quarter of the country was exposed. Having thereby rendered himself particularly obnoxious to the English borderers, a strong party was formed, which succeeded in despoiling him, by plundering his house and driving away his whole live stock. At the head of a large party he pursued and overtook the "spoil-encumbered foe;" a fierce and bloody contest ensued, in which George fell the victim of a former feud, leaving his widow, Marion, in poverty, with her son Wallace, an only child in the tenth year of his age. By the liberality of her neighbours, the widow was replaced in a small farm;

but by subsequent incursions she was reduced to such poverty that she occupied a small cottage, with a cow, which the kindness of a neighbouring farmer permitted to pasture on his fields. This, with the industry and filial affection of her son, now in his twentieth year, enabled her to live with a degree of comfort and contented resignation.

With a manly and athletic form, Wallace Maxwell inherited the courage of his father, and the patriotic ardour of the chieftain after whom he had been named ; and Wallace had been heard to declare, that although he could not expect to free his country from the incursions of the English borderers, he trusted he should yet be able to take ample vengeance for the untimely death of his father.

But although his own private wrongs and those of his country had a powerful influence on the mind of Wallace Maxwell, yet his heart was susceptible of a far loftier passion.

His fine manly form and graceful bearing had attractions for many a rural fair ; and he would have found no difficulty in matching with youthful beauty considerably above his own humble station. But his affections were fixed on Mary Morrison, a maiden as poor in worldly wealth as himself ; but nature had been more than usually indulgent to her in a handsome person and fine features ; and, what was of infinitely more value, her heart was imbued with virtuous principles, and her mind better cultivated than could have been expected from her station in life. To these accomplishments were superadded a native dignity, tempered with modesty, and a most winning-sweetness of manner. Mary was the daughter of a man who had seen better days ; but he was ruined by the incursions of the English borderers ; and both he and her mother dying soon after, Mary was left a helpless orphan in the twentieth year of her age. Her beauty procured her many

admirers ; and her unprotected state (for she had no relations in Annandale) left her exposed to the insidious temptations of unprincipled villainy ; but they soon discovered that neither flattery, bribes, nor the fairest promises, had the slightest influence on her spotless mind. There were many, however, who sincerely loved her, and made most honourable proposals ; among whom was Wallace Maxwell, perhaps the poorest of her admirers, but who succeeded in gaining her esteem and affection. Mary and he were fellow-servants to the farmer from whom his mother had her cottage ; and, on account of the troublesome state of the country, Wallace slept every night in his mother's house as her guardian and protector. Mary and he were about the same age, both in the bloom of youthful beauty ; but both had discrimination to look beyond external attractions ; and, although they might be said to live in the light of each other's eyes, reason convinced them that the time was yet distant when it would be prudent to consummate that union which was the dearest object of their wishes.

A foray had been made by the English, in which their leader, the son of a rich borderer, had been made prisoner, and a heavy ransom paid to Sir John, the warden, for his release. This the avaricious warden considered a perquisite of his office ; and it accordingly went into his private pocket. Soon after this, the party who had resolved on ruining Wallace Maxwell for his threats of vengeance, took advantage of a thick fog during the day, succeeded by a dark night, in making an incursion on Annandale, principally for the purpose of capturing the young man. By stratagem they effected their purpose ; and the widow's cow, and Wallace her son, were both carried off as part of the spoil. The youth's life might have been in considerable danger, had his capture not been discovered by

the man who had recently paid a high ransom for his own son, and he now took instant possession of Wallace, resolving that he should be kept a close prisoner till ransomed by a sum equal to that paid to the warden.

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to say whether the grief of Widow Maxwell for her son, or that of Mary Morrison for her lover, was greatest. But early in the ensuing morning the widow repaired to Amisfield, related the circumstance to Sir John, with tears beseeching him, as the plunderers were not yet far distant, to despatch his forces after them, and rescue her son, with the property of which she had been despoiled, for they had carried off everything, even to her bed-clothes.

Wallace Maxwell had some time before incurred the warden's displeasure, whose mind was not generous enough either to forget or forgive. He treated Marion with an indifference approaching almost to contempt, by telling her that it would be exceedingly improper to alarm the country about such a trivial incident, to which every person in that quarter was exposed ; and although she kneeled to him, he refused to comply with her request, and proudly turned away.

With a heavy and an aching heart, the widow called on Mary Morrison on her way home to her desolate dwelling, relating the failure of her application, and uttering direful lamentations for the loss of her son ; all of which were echoed by the no less desponding maiden.

In the anguish of her distress, Mary formed the resolution of waiting on the warden, and again urging the petition which had already been so rudely rejected. Almost frantic, she hastened to the castle, demanding to see Sir John. Her person was known to the porter, and he was also now acquainted with the cause of her present distress ; she therefore found a ready admission. Always beautiful, the wildness of her air, the liquid fire which beamed in her

eyes, from which tears streamed over her glowing cheeks, and the perturbation which heaved her swelling bosom, rendered her an object of more than ordinary interest in the sight of the warden. She fell at his feet and attempted to tell her melancholy tale ; but convulsive sobs stifled her utterance. He then took her unresisting hand, raised her up, led her to a seat, and bade her compose herself before she attempted to speak.

With a faltering tongue, and eyes which, like the lightning of heaven, seemed capable of penetrating a heart of adamant, and in all the energy and pathos of impassioned grief, she told her tale,—imploring the warden, if he ever regarded his mother, or if capable of feeling for the anguish of a woman, to have pity on them, and instantly exert himself to restore the most dutiful of sons, and the most faithful of lovers, to his humble petitioners, whose gratitude should cease only with their lives.

" You are probably not aware," said he, in a kindly tone, " of the difficulty of gratifying your wishes. Wallace Maxwell has rendered himself the object of vengeance to the English borderers ; and, before now, he must be in captivity so secure, that any measure to rescue him by force of arms would be unavailing. But, for your sake, I will adopt the only means which can restore him, namely, to purchase his ransom by gold. But you are aware that it must be high, and I trust your gratitude will be in proportion."

" Everything in our power shall be done to evince our gratitude," replied the delighted Mary, a more animated glow suffusing her cheek, and her eyes beaming with a brighter lustre,— " Heaven reward you."

" To wait for my reward from heaven, would be to give credit to one who can make ready payment," replied the warden. " You, lovely Mary, have it in your power to make me a return,

which will render me your debtor, without in any degree impoverishing yourself ;”—and he paused, afraid or ashamed to speak the purpose of his heart. Such is the power which virgin beauty and innocence can exert on the most depraved inclinations.

Although alarmed, and suspecting his base design, such was the rectitude of Mary’s guileless heart, that she could not believe the warden in earnest ; and starting from his proffered embrace, she with crimson blushes replied, “ I am sure, sir, your heart could never permit you so far to insult a hapless maiden. You have spoken to try my affection for Wallace Maxwell ; let me therefore again implore you to take such measures as you may think best for obtaining his release ;” and a fresh flood of tears flowed in torrents from her eyes, while she gazed wistfully in his face, with a look so imploringly tender, that it might have moved the heart of a demon.

With many flattering blandishments, and much artful sophistry, he endeavoured to win her to his purpose ; but perceiving that his attempts were unavailing, he concluded thus :—“ All that I have promised I am ready to perform ; but I swear by Heaven, that unless you grant me the favour which I have so humbly solicited, Wallace Maxwell may perish in a dungeon, or by the hand of his enemies ; for he shall never be rescued by me. Think, then, in time, before you leave me, and for his sake, and your own future happiness, do not foolishly destroy it for ever.”

With her eyes flashing indignant fire, and her bosom throbbing with the anguish of insulted virtue, she flung herself from his hateful embrace, and, rushing from his presence, with a sorrowful and almost bursting heart, left the castle.

Widow Maxwell had a mind not easily depressed, and although in great affliction for her son, did not despair of

his release. She was ignorant of Mary’s application to the warden, and had been revolving in her mind the propriety of seeking an audience of the king, and detailing her wrongs, both at the hands of the English marauders and Sir John. She was brooding on this when Mary entered her cottage, and, in the agony of despairing love and insulted honour, related the reception she had met from the warden. The relation confirmed the widow’s half formed resolution, and steeled her heart to its purpose. After they had responded each other’s sighs, and mingled tears together, the old woman proposed waiting on her friend the farmer, declaring her intentions, and, if he approved of them, soliciting his permission for Mary to accompany her.

The warden’s indolent neglect of duty was a subject of general complaint ; the farmer, therefore, highly approved of the widow’s proposal, believing that it would not only procure her redress, but might be of advantage to the country. He urged their speedy and secret departure, requesting that whatever answer they received might not be divulged till the final result was seen ; and next morning, at early dawn, the widow and Mary took their departure for Stirling. King James was easy of access to the humblest of his subjects ; and the two had little difficulty in obtaining admission to the royal presence. Widow Maxwell had in youth been a beautiful woman, and, although her early bloom had passed, might still have been termed a comely and attractive matron, albeit in the autumn of life. In a word, her face was still such as would have recommended her suit to the king, whose heart was at all times feinely alive to the attraction of female beauty. But, on the present occasion, although she was the petitioner, the auxiliary whom she had brought, though silent, was infinitely the more powerful pleader ; for Mary might be said to resem-

ble the half-blown rose in the early summer, when its glowing leaves are wet with the dews of morning. James was so struck with their appearance, that, before they had spoken, he secretly wished that their petitions might be such as he could with justice and honour grant, for he already felt that it would be impossible to refuse them.

Although struck with awe on coming into the presence of their sovereign, the easy condescension and affability of James soon restored them to comparative tranquillity ; and the widow told her “ plain, unvarnished tale ” with such artless simplicity, and moving pathos, as would have made an impression on a less partial auditor than his Majesty. When she came to state the result of Mary’s application to Sir John, she paused, blushed, and still remained silent. James instantly conjectured the cause, which was confirmed when he saw Mary’s face crimsoned all over.

Suppressing his indignation, “ Well, I shall be soon in Annandale,” said he, “ and will endeavour to do you justice. Look at this nobleman,” pointing to one in the chamber ; “ when I send him for you, come to me where he shall guide. In the meantime, he will find you safe lodgings for the night, and give you sufficient to bear your expenses home, whither I wish you to return as soon as possible, and be assured that your case shall not be forgotten.”

It is generally known that James, with a love of justice, had a considerable share of eccentricity in his character, and that he frequently went over the country in various disguises—such as that of a pedlar, an itinerant musician, or even a wandering beggar. These disguises were sometimes assumed for the purpose of discovering the abuses practised by his servants, and not unfrequently from the love of frolic, and, like the Caliph in the “ Arabian Nights,” in quest of amusement. On these occasions, when he chose to discover himself,

it was always by the designation of the “ Gude-man of Ballengeich. He had a private passage by which he could leave the palace, unseen by any one, and he could make his retreat alone, or accompanied by a disguised attendant, according to his inclination.

On the present occasion, he determined to visit the warden of the March incog.; and, making the necessary arrangements, he soon arrived in Annandale. His inquiries concerning the widow and Mary corroborated the opinion he had previously formed, and learning where Mary resided, he resolved to repair thither in person, disguised as a mendicant. On approaching the farmer’s, he had to pass a rivulet, at which there was a girl washing linen, and a little observation convinced him it was Mary Morrison. When near, he pretended to be taken suddenly ill, and sat down on a knoll, groaning piteously. Mary came instantly to him, tenderly enquiring what ailed him, and whether she could render him any assistance. James replied, it was a painful distemper, by which he was frequently attacked ; but if she could procure him a draught of warm milk, that, and an hour’s rest, would relieve him. Mary answered, that if he could, with her assistance, walk to the farm, which she pointed out near by, he would be kindly cared for. She assisted him to rise, and, taking his arm, permitted him to lean upon her shoulder, as they crept slowly along. He met much sympathy in the family, and there he heard the history of Mary and Wallace Maxwell (not without execrations on the warden for his indolence), and their affirmations that they were sure, if the king knew how he neglected his duty, he would either be dismissed or severely punished ; although the former had spoken plainer than others whom James had conversed with, he found that Sir John was generally disliked, and he became impatient for the hour of retribution.

Marching back towards Dumfries, James rendezvoused for the night in a small village called Duncow, in the parish of Kirkmahoe, and next morning he set out for Amisfield, which lay in the neighbourhood, disguised as a beggar. Part of his retinue he left in Duncow, and part he ordered to lie in wait in a ravine near Amisfield till he should require their attendance. Having cast away his beggar's cloak, he appeared at the gate of the warden's castle in the dress of a plain countryman, and requested the porter to procure him an immediate audience of Sir John. But he was answered that the warden had just sat down to dinner, during which it was a standing order that he should never be disturbed on any pretence whatever.

"And how long will he sit?" said James.

"Two hours, perhaps three; he must not be intruded on till his bell ring," replied the porter.

"I am a stranger, and cannot wait so long; take this silver groat, and go to your master, and say that I wish to see him on business of importance, and will detain him only a few minutes."

The porter delivered the message, and soon returned, saying—"Sir John says, that however important your business may be, you must wait his time, or go the way you came."

"That is very hard. Here are two groats; go again, and say that I have come from the Border, where I saw the English preparing for an incursion, and have posted thither with the information; and that I think he will be neglecting his duty if he do not immediately fire the beacons and alarm the country."

This message was also carried, and the porter returned with a sorrowful look, and shaking head.

"Well, does the warden consent to see me?" said the anxious stranger,

who had gained the porter's goodwill by his liberality.

"I beg your pardon, friend," replied the menial; "but I must give Sir John's answer in his own words. He says if you choose to wait two hours he will then see whether you are a knave or a fool; but if you send another such impertinent message to him, both you and I shall have cause to repent it. However, for your civility, come with me, and I will find you something to eat and a horn of good ale, to put off the time till Sir John can be seen."

"I give you hearty thanks, my good fellow, but, as I said, I cannot wait. Here, take these three groats; go again to the warden, and say that the Gudeman of Ballengeich insists upon seeing him immediately."

No sooner was the porter's back turned, than James winded his bugle-horn so loudly that its echoes seemed to shake the castle walls; and the porter found his master in consternation, which his message changed into fear and trembling,

By the time the warden had reached the gate, James had thrown off his coat, and stood arrayed in the garb and insignia of royalty, while his train of nobles were galloping up in great haste. When they were collected around him, the king, for the first time, condescended to address the terrified warden, who had prostrated himself at the feet of his sovereign.

"Rise, Sir John," said he, with a stern and commanding air. You bade your porter tell me that I was either knave or fool, and you were right, for I have erred in delegating my power to a knave like you."

In tremulous accents the warden attempted to excuse himself by stammering out that he did not know he was wanted by his Majesty.

"But I sent you a message that I wished to speak with you on business of importance, and you refused to be

disturbed. The meanest of my subjects has access to me at all times. I hear before I condemn, and shall do so with you, against whom I have many and heavy charges."

"Will it please your Majesty to honour my humble dwelling with your presence, and afford me an opportunity of speaking in my own defence?" said the justly alarmed warden.

"No, Sir John, I will not enter beneath that roof as a judge, where I was refused admission as a petitioner. I hold my court at Hoddam Castle, where I command your immediate attendance; where I will hear your answer to the charges I have against you. In the meantime, before our departure, you will give orders for the entertainment of my retinue, men and horses, at your castle, during my stay in Annandale."

The king then appointed several of the lords in attendance to accompany him to Hoddam Castle, whither he commanded the warden to follow him with all possible despatch.

Sir John was conscious of negligence, and even something worse, in the discharge of his duty, although ignorant of the particular charges to be brought against him; but when ushered into the presence of his sovereign, he endeavoured to assume the easy confidence of innocence.

James proceeded to business, by inquiring if there was not a recent incursion of a small marauding party, in which a poor widow's cow was carried off, her house plundered, and her son taken prisoner; and if she did not early next morning state this to him, requesting him to recover her property.

"Did you, Sir John, do your utmost in the case?"

"I acknowledge I did not; but the widow shall have the best cow in my possession, and her house furnished anew. I hope that will satisfy your Majesty."

"And her son, how is he to be restored?"

"When we have the good fortune to make an English prisoner, he can be exchanged."

"Mark me! Sir John. If Wallace Maxwell is not brought before me in good health within a week from this date, you shall hang by the neck from that tree waving before the window. I have no more to say at present. Be ready to wait on me in one hour when your presence is required."

The warden knew the determined resolution of the king, and instantly despatched a confidential servant, vested with full powers to procure the liberation of Wallace Maxwell, at whatever price, and to bring him safely back without a moment's delay. In the meantime, the retinue of men and horses, amounting to several hundreds, were living at free quarters, in Sir John's castle, and the visits of the king diffusing gladness and joy over the whole country.

Next morning James sent the young nobleman, whom he had pointed out to the widow at Stirling, to bring her and Mary Morrison to Hoddam Castle. He received both with easy condescension; when the widow, with much grateful humility, endeavoured to express her thanks, saying that Sir John had last evening sent her a cow worth double that she had lost; also blankets, and other articles of higher value than all that had been carried away; but, with tears in her eyes, she said, all these were as nothing without her dear son. Assuring them that their request had not been neglected, James dismissed them, with the joyful hope of soon seeing Wallace, as he would send for them immediately on his arrival.

The distress of the warden increased every hour, for he was a prisoner in his own castle; and his feelings may be conjectured, when he received a message from the king, commanding him to

come to Hoddam Castle next day by noon, and either bring Wallace Maxwell along with him, or prepare for a speedy exit into the next world. He had just seen the sun rise, of which it seemed probable he should never see the setting, when his servant arrived with Wallace, whose liberty had been purchased at an exorbitant ransom. Without allowing the young man to rest, Sir John hurried him off to Hoddam Castle, and sent in a message that he waited an audience of his Majesty.

To make sure of the youth's identity, the king sent instantly for his mother, and the meeting called forth all the best feelings of his heart, for maternal affection triumphed over every other emotion, and it was only after the first ebullition of it had subsided, that she bade him kneel to his sovereign, to whom he owed his liberty, and most probably his life. Wallace gracefully bent his knee, and took Heaven to witness that both should be devoted to his Majesty's service.

James was delighted with the manly appearance and gallant behaviour of Wallace; and, after having satisfied himself of the sincerity of his attachment to Mary, he ordered him to withdraw.

He next despatched a messenger for Mary, who, the moment she came, was ushered into the presence of Sir John; James marking the countenance of both,—that of Mary flushed with resentment, while her eye flashed with indignant fire. The pale and deadly hue which overspread the warden's cheek was a tacit acknowledgment of his guilt.

"Do you know that young woman, Sir John? Reply to my questions truly; and be assured that your life depends upon the sincerity of your answers," said the king, in a determined and stern voice.

"Yes, my liege, I have seen her," said Sir John, his lip quivering, and his tongue faltering.

"Where?"

"At Amisfield."

"On what occasion?"

"She came to me for the release of Wallace Maxwell."

"And you refused her, except upon conditions which were an insult to her, and a disgrace to yourself. Speak; is it not so?"

"To my shame, my sovereign, I confess my guilt; but I am willing to make all the reparation in my power; and I leave it to be named by your Majesty."

"You deserve to be hanged, Sir John; but when I look on that face, I acknowledge your temptation, and it pleads a mitigation of punishment. You know that Mary loves and is beloved by Wallace Maxwell, whom you have already ransomed; you shall give him a farm of not less than fifty acres of good land, rent-free, during his life, or that of the woman he marries; and, further, you shall stock it with cattle, and every article necessary, with a comfortable dwelling;—all this you shall perform within three months from this date. If you think these conditions hard, I give you the alternative of swinging from that tree before sunset. Take your choice."

"My sovereign, I submit to the conditions, and promise that I shall do my best to make the couple happy."

Wallace was now called in, when Mary clasped him in her arms, both falling on their knees before their sovereign. He raised them up and said, "I have tried both your loves, and found them faithful. Your Mary is all that you believed her, and brings you a dowry which she will explain. I shall see your hands united before I leave Annandale, and preside at the feast. Let your care of the widow be a remuneration for what she has done for both, and I trust all of you will long remember the Gudeman of Ballengeich's visit to Annandale."—*Edinburgh Literary Gazette.*

THE ALEHOUSE PARTY:

A CHAPTER FROM AN UNPUBLISHED NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHORS OF "THE ODD VOLUME."

The night drove on wi' sangs and clatter,
And aye the ale was growing better.—BURNS.

ON the evening of that day which saw Mrs Wallace enter Park a bride, Robin Kinniburgh and a number of his cronies met at the village alehouse to celebrate the happy event. Every chair, stool, and bench being occupied, Robin and his chum, Tammy Tacket, took possession of the top of the meal girnel ; and as they were elevated somewhat above the company, they appeared like two rival provosts, looking down on their surrounding bailies.

"It's a gude thing," said Tammy, "that the wives and weans are keepit out the night; folk get enough o' them at hame."

"I wonder," said Jamie Wilson, "what's become o' Andrew Gilmour."

"Hae ye no heard," said Robin, "that his wife died yesterday?"

"Is she dead?" exclaimed Tammy Tacket. "Faith," continued he, giving Robin a jog with his elbow, "I think a man might hae waur furniture in his house than a dead wife."

"That's a truth," replied Jamie Wilson, "as mony an honest man kens to his cost.—But send round the pint stoup, and let us hae a health to the laird and the leddy, and mony happy years to them and theirs."

When the applause attending this toast had subsided, Robin was universally called on for a song.

"I hae the hoast," answered Robin ; "that's aye what the leddies say when they are asked to sing."

"Deil a hoast is about you," cried Wattie Shuttle ; "come awa wi' a sang without mair ado."

"Weel," replied Robin, "what

maun be, maun be ; so I'll gie ye a sang that was made by a laddie that lived east-awa ; he was aye daundering, poor chiel, amang the broomie knowes, and mony's the time I ha'e seen him lying at the side o' the wimpling burn, writing on ony bit paper he could get haud o'. After he was dead, this bit sang was found in his pocket, and his puir mother gied it to me, as a kind o' keepsake ; and now I'll let you hear it,—I sing it to the tune o' 'I hae laid a herrin' in saut.'"

SONG.

It's I'm a sweet lassie, without e'er a faut ;
Sae ilka ane tells me,—sae it maun be true ;
To his kail my auld faither has plenty o' saut,
And that brings the lads in gowpens to woo.
There's Saunders M'Latchie, wha bides at the

Mill,

He wants a wee wifie, to bake and to brew ;
But Saunders, for me, at the Mill may stay still,
For his first wife was pushioned, if what they
say's true.

The next is Tam Watt, who is grieve to the Laird,—

Last Sabbath, at puir me a sheep's e'e he threw ;
But Tam's like the picters I've seen o' Blue Beard,

And sic folk's no that chancie, if what they
say's true.

Then there's Grierson the cobbler, he'll fleech
an' he'll beg,

That I'd be his awl in awl, darlin' and doo ;
But Grierson the cobbler's a happy leg,
And nae man that hobbles need come here to
woo.

And there's Murdoch the gauger, wha rides a
blind horse,

And nae man can mak a mair beautifu' boo ;
But I shall ne'er tak him, for better, for worse,
For, sax days a week, gauger Murdoch is
fou.

I wonder when Willie Waught's faither 'll dee ;
(I wonder hoo that brings the blude to my
brow.)

I wonder if Willie will then be for me ;—
I wonder if then he'll be coming to woo ?

"It's your turn now to sing, Tammy," said Robin, "although I dinna ken that ye are very gude at it."

"Me sing!" cried Tammy, "I canna even sing a psalm, far less a sang ; but if ye like, I'll tell you a story."

"Come awa then, a story is next best ; but haud a' your tongues there, you chiels," cried Robin, giving the wink to his cronies ; "we a' ken Tammy is unco gude at telling a story, mair especially if it be about himself."

"Aweel," said Tammy, clearing his throat, "I'll tell you what happened to me when I was ance in Embro'. I fancy ye a' ken the Calton hill?"

"Whatna daftlike question is that, when ye ken very weel we hae a' been in Embro' as weel as yoursel?"

"Weel then," began Tammy, "I was coming ower the hill—"

"What hill?" asked Jamie Wilson. "Corstorphine hill?"

"Corstorphine fiddlestick!" exclaimed Tammy. "Did ye no hear me say the Calton hill at the first, which, ye ken, is thought there the principal hill?"

"What's that ye're saying about Principal Hill?" asked Robin. "I kent him weel ance in a day."

"Now, Tammy," cried Willie Walkinshaw, "can ye no gang on wi' your story, without a' this balwavering and nonsense about coming ower ane o' our Professors ; my faith, it's no an easy matter to come ower some o' them."

"Very weel," said Tammy, a little angrily, "I'll say nae mair about it, but just drap the hill."

"Whaur, whaur?" cried several voices at once.

"I'm thinkin'," said Robin, drily, "some o' the Embro' folk would be muckle obliged to ye if ye would drap it in the Nor' Loch."

"Ye're a set o' gomerals!" exclaimed Tammy, in great wrath. "I meant naething o' the sort ; but only that I would gie ower speaking about it."

"So we're no to hae the story after a'?" said Matthew Henderson.

"Yes," said Tammy ; "I'm quite agreeable to tell't, if ye will only sit still and haud your tongues. Aweel, I was coming ower the hill ae night."

"Odsake, Tammy," cried Robin, "will ye ne'er get ower that hill? Ye hae tell't us that ten times already ; gang on, man, wi' the story."

"Then, to mak a lang story short, as I was coming ower the hill ae night about ten o'clock I fell in—"

"Fell in!" cried Matthew Henderson, "Whaur? Was't a hole, or a well?"

"I fell in," replied Tammy, "wi' a man."

"Fell in wi' a man!" said Willie Walkinshaw. "Weel, as there were twa o' ye, ye could help ane anither out."

"Na, na," roared Tammy, "I dinna mean that at a' ; I just cam up wi' him."

"I doubt, Tammy," cried Robin, giving a sly wink to his cronies, "if ye gaed up the Calton hill wi' a man at ten o'clock at night, I'm thinking ye'll hae been boozing some gate or ither wi' him afore that."

"Me boozing?" cried Tammy. "I ne'er saw the man's face afore or since ; unless it was in the police office the next day."

"Now, Tammy Tacket," said Robin, gravely, "just tak a' frien's advice, and gie ower sic splores ; they're no creditable to a decent married man like you ; and dinna be bleezing and bragging about being in the police office ; for it stands to reason ye wouldna be there for ony gude."

"Deil tak me," cried Tammy, jumping up on the meal girnel, and brandishing the pint stoup, "if I dinna fling this at the head of the first man

who says a word afore I be done wi' my story:—And, as I said before, I fell in—”

Poor Tammy was not at all prepared for his words being so soon verified, for, in his eagerness to enforce attention, he stamped violently with his hobnailed shoe on the girnel, which giving way with a loud crash, Tammy suddenly disappeared from the view of the astonished party. Robin, who had barely time to save himself from the falling ruins, was still laughing with all his might, when Mrs Scoreup burst in upon them, saying, “What the sorrow is a' this stramash about?”—but seeing a pale and ghastly figure rearing itself from the very heart of her meal girnel, she ejaculated, “Gude preserve us!” and, retreating a few steps, seized the broth ladle, and prepared to stand on the defensive.

At this moment Grizzy Tacket made her appearance at the open door, saying, “Is blethering Tam here?”

“Help me out, Robin, man,” cried Tammy.

“Help ye out!” said Grizzy; “What the sorrow took you in there, ye drucken ne'er-do-weel?”

“Dinna abuse your gudeman, wife,” said Jamie Wilson.

“Gudeman!” retorted Grizzy; “troth, there's few o' ye deserve the name; and as for that idle loon, I ken he'll no work a stroke the morn, though wife and weans should want baith milk and meal.”

“Odsake, wife,” cried Robin, “if ye shake Tammy weel, he'll keep ye a' in parrich for a week.”

“She'll shake him,” cried the angry Mrs Scoreup; “cocks are free o' horses' corn; I'll shake him,” making, as she spoke, towards the unfortunate half-choked Tammy.

“Will ye, faith?” screamed Grizzy, putting her arms akimbo. “Will ye

offer to lay a hand on my gudeman, and me standing here? Come out this minute, ye Jonadub, and come hame to your ain house.”

“No ae fit shall he steer frae this,” cried Mrs Scoreup, slapping to the door, “till I see wha is to pay me for the spoiling o' my gude new girnel, forby the meal that's wasted.”

“New girnel!” exclaimed Grizzy, with a provoking sneer, “it's about as auld as yoursel, and as little worth.”

“Ye ill-tongued randy!” cried Mrs Scoreup, giving the ladle a most portentous flourish.

“Whisht, whisht, gudewife,” said Robin; “say nae mair about it, we'll mak it up amang us; and now, Grizzy, tak Tammy awa hame.”

“It's no right in you, Robin,” said Grizzy, “to be filling Tammy fou, and keeping decent folks out o' their beds till this time o' night.”

“It's a' Tammy's faut,” replied Robin; “for ye ken as well as me, that when ance he begins to tell a story, there's nae such thing as stopping him; he has been blethering about the Calton hill at nae allowance.”

The last words seemed to strike on Tammy's ear; who hiccuped out, “As I cam ower the Calton hill—”

“Will naebody stап a peat in that man's hause?” exclaimed Matthew Henderson. “For ony sake, honest woman, tak him awa, or we'll be keepit on the Calton hill the whole night.”

“Tak haud o' me, Tammy,” said Robin; “I'll gang hame wi' ye.”

“I can gang mysel,” said Tammy, giving Robin a shove, and staggering towards the door.

“Gang yoursel!” cried Grizzy, as she followed her helpmate; “ye dinna look very like it:” and thus the party broke up—

And each went aff their separate way,
Resolved to meet anither day.

AUCHINDRANE; OR, THE AYRSHIRE TRAGEDY.

BY SIR WALTER SCOTT.

JOHN MUIR, or MURE, of Auchindrane, was a gentleman of an ancient family and good estate, in the west of Scotland, bold, ambitious, treacherous to the last degree, and utterly unconscientious,—a Richard the Third in private life, inaccessible alike to pity and remorse. His view was to raise the power and extend the grandeur of his own family. This gentleman had married the daughter of Thomas Kennedy of Barganie, who was, excepting the Earl of Cassilis, the most important person in all Carrick, the district of Ayrshire which he inhabited, and where the name of Kennedy held so great a sway as to give rise to the popular rhyme,—

'Twixt Wigton and the town of Ayr,
Portpatrick and the Cruives of Cree,
No man need think for to bide there,
Unless he court the Kennedie.

Now, Muir of Auchindrane, who had promised himself high advancement by means of his father-in-law, saw, with envy and resentment, that his influence remained second and inferior to the house of Cassilis, chief of all the Kennedies. The Earl was indeed a minor, but his authority was maintained and his affairs well managed by his uncle, Sir Thomas Kennedy of Culleyne, the brother to the deceased earl, and tutor and guardian to the present. This worthy gentleman supported his nephew's dignity and the credit of the house so effectually that Barganie's consequence was much thrown into the shade, and the ambitious Auchindrane, his son-in-law, saw no better remedy than to remove so formidable a rival as Culleyne by violent means.

For this purpose, in the year 1597, he came with a party of followers to the town of Maybole (where Sir Thomas

Kennedy of Culleyne resided), and lay in ambush in an orchard through which he knew that his destined victim was to pass, in returning homewards from a house where he was engaged to sup. Sir Thomas Kennedy came alone and unattended, when he was suddenly seized and fired upon by Auchindrane and his accomplices, who, having missed their aim, drew their swords and rushed upon him to slay him. But the party thus assailed at disadvantage had the good fortune to hide himself for that time in a ruinous house, where he lay concealed till the inhabitants of the place came to his assistance.

Sir Thomas Kennedy prosecuted Muir for this assault, who, finding himself in danger from the law, made a sort of apology and agreement with the Lord of Culleyne, to whose daughter he united his eldest son, in testimony of the closest friendship in future. This agreement was sincere on the part of Kennedy, who, after it had been entered into, showed himself Auchindrane's friend and assistant on all occasions. But it was most false and treacherous on that of Muir, who continued the purpose of murdering his new friend and ally on the first opportunity.

Auchindrane's first attempt to effect this was by means of the young Gilbert Kennedy of Barganie (for old Barganie, Auchindrane's father-in-law, was dead), whom he persuaded to brave Cassilis, as one who usurped an undue influence over the rest of the name. Accordingly, this hot-headed youth, at the instigation of Auchindrane, rode past the gate of the Earl of Cassilis without waiting on his chief, or sending him any message of civility. This led to mutual defiance, being regarded by the earl, according to the ideas of the time, as a personal

insult. Both parties took the field with their followers, at the head of about two hundred and fifty men, on each side. The action which ensued was shorter and less bloody than might have been expected. Young Barganie, with the rashness of headlong courage, and Auchindrane, fired by deadly enmity to the house of Cassilis, made a precipitate attack on the earl, whose men were strongly posted and under cover. They were received by a heavy fire. Barganie was slain. Muir of Auchindrane, severely wounded in the thigh, became unable to sit on his horse, and the leaders thus slain or disabled, their party drew off without continuing the action. It must be particularly observed that Sir Thomas Kennedy remained neuter in this quarrel, considering his connection with Auchindrane as too intimate to be broken even by his desire to assist his nephew.

For this temperate and honourable conduct he met a vile reward; for Auchindrane, in resentment of the loss of his relative Barganie, and the downfall of his ambitious hopes, continued his practices against the life of Sir Thomas of Culleyne, and chance favoured his wicked purpose.

The knight of Culleyne, finding himself obliged to go to Edinburgh on a particular day, sent a message by a servant to Muir, in which he told him, in the most unsuspecting confidence, the purpose of his journey, and named the road which he proposed to take, inviting Muir to meet him at Duppill, to the west of the town of Ayr, a place appointed for the purpose of giving him any commissions which he might have for Edinburgh, and assuring his treacherous ally he would attend to any business which he might have in the Scottish metropolis as anxiously as to his own. Sir Thomas Kennedy's message was carried to the town of Maybole, where his messenger, for some trivial reason, had the import com-

mitted to writing by a schoolmaster in that town, and despatched it to its destination by means of a poor student, named Dalrymple, instead of carrying it to the house of Auchindrane in person.

This suggested to Muir a diabolical plot. Having thus received tidings of Sir Thomas Kennedy's motions, he conceived the infernal purpose of having the confiding friend who sent the information waylaid and murdered at the place appointed to meet with him, not only in friendship, but for the purpose of rendering him service. He dismissed the messenger Dalrymple, cautioning the lad to carry back the letter to Maybole, and to say that he had not found him, Auchindrane, in his house. Having taken this precaution, he proceeded to instigate the brother of the slain Gilbert of Barganie, Thomas Kennedy of Drumurghie by name, and Walter Muir of Cloncaird, a kinsman of his own, to take this opportunity of revenging Barganie's death. The fiery young men were easily induced to undertake the crime. They waylaid the unsuspecting Sir Thomas of Culleyne at the place appointed to meet the traitor Auchindrane, and the murderers having in company five or six servants well mounted and armed, assaulted and cruelly murdered him with many wounds.

The revenge due for his uncle's murder was keenly pursued by the Earl of Cassilis. As the murderers fled from trial, they were declared outlaws; which doom being pronounced by three blasts of a horn, was called "being put to the horn, and declared the king's rebel." Muir of Auchindrane was strongly suspected of having been the instigator of the crime. But he conceived there could be no evidence to prove his guilt if he could keep the boy Dalrymple out of the way, who delivered the letter which made him acquainted with Culleyne's journey, and the place at which he meant to halt. Muir

brought Dalrymple to his house, but the youth tiring of this confinement, Muir sent him to reside with a friend, Montgomery of Skelmorley, who maintained him under a borrowed name amid the desert regions of the then almost savage island of Arran. Being confident in the absence of this material witness, Auchindrane, instead of flying like his agents Drumurghie and Cloncaird, presented himself boldly at the bar, demanded a fair trial, and offered his person in combat to the death against any of Lord Cassilis' friends who might impugn his innocence. This audacity was successful, and he was dismissed without trial.

Still, however, Muir did not consider himself safe so long as Dalrymple was within the realm of Scotland ; and the danger grew more pressing, when he learned that the lad had become impatient of the restraint which he sustained in the island of Arran, and returned to some of his friends in Ayrshire. Muir no sooner heard of this than he again obtained possession of the boy's person, and a second time concealed him in Auchindrane, until he found an opportunity to transport him to the Low Countries, where he contrived to have him enlisted in Buccleuch's regiment ; trusting, doubtless, that some one of the numerous chances of war might destroy the poor young man whose life was so dangerous to him.

But after five or six years' uncertain safety, bought at the expense of so much violence and cunning, Auchindrane's fears were exasperated with frenzy, when he found this dangerous witness, having escaped from all the perils of climate and battle, had left, or been discharged from, the Legion of Borderers, and had again accomplished his return to Ayrshire. There is ground to suspect that Dalrymple knew the nature of the hold which he possessed over Auchindrane, and was desirous of

extorting from his fears some better provision than he had found either in Arran or the Netherlands. But, if so, it was a fatal experiment to tamper with the fears of such a man as Auchindrane, who determined to rid himself effectually of this unhappy young man.

Muir now lodged him in a house of his own, called Chapeldonan, tenanted by a vassal and connection of his, named James Bannatyne. This man he commissioned to meet him at ten o'clock at night, on the sea-sands, near Girvan, and bring with him the unfortunate Dalrymple, the object of his fear and dread. The victim seems to have come with Bannatyne without the least suspicion. When Bannatyne and Dalrymple came to the appointed spot, Auchindrane met them, accompanied by his eldest son James. Old Auchindrane, having taken Bannatyne aside, imparted his bloody purpose of ridding himself of Dalrymple for ever, by murdering him on the spot. His own life and honour were, he said, endangered by the manner in which this inconvenient witness repeatedly thrust himself back into Ayrshire, and nothing could secure his safety but taking the lad's life, in which action he requested James Bannatyne's assistance. Bannatyne felt some compunction, and remonstrated against the cruel expedient, saying it would be better to transport Dalrymple to Ireland, and take precautions against his return. While old Auchindrane seemed disposed to listen to this proposal, his son concluded that the time was come for accomplishing the purpose of their meeting, and without waiting the termination of his father's conference with Bannatyne, he rushed suddenly on Dalrymple, beat him to the ground, and kneeling down upon him, with his father's assistance accomplished the crime, by strangling the unhappy object of their fear and jealousy. Bannatyne, the witness, and partly the accomplice, of the murder, assisted

them in their attempt to make a hole in the sand with a spade which they had brought on purpose, in order to conceal the dead body. But as the tide was coming in, the hole which they made filled with water before they could get the body buried ; and the ground seemed, to their terrified consciences, to refuse to be accessory to concealing their crime. Despairing of hiding the corpse in the manner they proposed, the murderers carried it out into the sea as deep as they dared wade, and there abandoned it to the billows, trusting that the wind, which was blowing off the shore, would drive these remains of their crime out to sea, where they would never more be heard of. But the sea, as well as the land, seemed unwilling to conceal their cruelty. After floating for some hours, or days, the body was, by the wind and tide, again driven on shore, near the very spot where the murder had been committed.

This attracted general attention ; and when the corpse was known to be that of the same William Dalrymple whom Auchindrane had so often spirited out of the country, or concealed when he was in it, a strong and general suspicion arose that this young person had met with foul play from the bold bad man, who had shown himself so much interested in his absence. Auchindrane, indeed, found himself so much the object of suspicion from this new crime that he resolved to fly from justice, and suffer himself to be declared a rebel and an outlaw rather than face a trial. He accordingly sought to provide himself with some ostensible cause for avoiding the law, with which the feelings of his kindred and friends might sympathise ; and none occurred to him as so natural as an assault upon some friend and adherent of the Earl of Cassilis. Should he kill such a one, it would be indeed an unlawful action, but so far from being infamous, would be accounted the natural consequence

of the avowed quarrel between the families. With this purpose, Muir, with the assistance of a relative, of whom he seems always to have had some ready to execute his worst purposes, beset Hugh Kennedy of Garriehorne, a follower of the earl, against whom they had especial ill-will, fired their pistols at him, and used other means to put him to death. But Garriehorne, a stout-hearted man and well-armed, defended himself in a very different manner from the unfortunate knight of Culleyne, and beat off the assailants, wounding young Auchindrane in the right hand, so that he well-nigh lost the use of it.

But though Auchindrane's purpose did not entirely succeed, he availed himself of it to circulate a report that if he could obtain a pardon for firing upon his feudal enemy with pistols, weapons declared unlawful by Act of Parliament, he would willingly stand his trial for the death of Dalrymple, respecting which he protested his total innocence. The king, however, was decidedly of opinion that the Muirs, both father and son, were alike guilty of both crimes, and used intercession with the Earl of Abercorn, as a person of power in these western counties, as well as in Ireland, to arrest and transmit them prisoners to Edinburgh. In consequence of the Earl's exertions, old Auchindrane was made prisoner, and lodged in the tolbooth of Edinburgh.

Young Auchindrane no sooner heard that his father was in custody, than he became as apprehensive of Bannatyne, the accomplice in Dalrymple's murder, telling tales, as ever his father had been of Dalrymple. He therefore hastened to him, and prevailed on him to pass over for a while to the neighbouring coast of Ireland, finding him money and means to accomplish the voyage, and engaging in the meantime to take care of his affairs in Scotland. Secure, as they thought, in this precaution, old

Auchindrane persisted in his innocence, and his son found security to stand his trial. Both appeared with the same confidence at the day appointed. The trial was, however, postponed, and Muir the elder dismissed, under high security to return when called for.

But King James, being convinced of the guilt of the accused, ordered young Auchindrane, instead of being sent to trial, to be examined under the force of torture, in order to compel him to tell whatever he knew of the things charged against him. He was accordingly severely tortured ; but the result only served to show that such examinations are as useless as they are cruel.

Young Auchindrane, a strong and determined ruffian, endured the torture with the utmost firmness, and by the constant audacity with which, in spite of the intolerable pain, he continued to assert his innocence, he spread so favourable an opinion of his case, that the detaining him in prison, instead of bringing him to open trial, was censured as severe and oppressive. James, however, remained firmly persuaded of his guilt, and by an exertion of authority quite inconsistent with our present laws, commanded young Auchindrane to be still detained in close custody till further light could be thrown on these dark proceedings.

In the meanwhile, old Auchindrane being, as we have seen, at liberty on pledges, skulked about in the west, feeling how little security he had gained by Dalrymple's murder, and that he had placed himself by that crime in the power of Bannatyne, whose evidence concerning the death of Dalrymple could not be less fatal than what Dalrymple might have told concerning Auchindrane's accession to the conspiracy against Sir Thomas Kennedy of Culleyne. But though the event had shown the error of his wicked policy, Auchindrane could think of no better mode in this case than that which had

failed in relation to Dalrymple. When any man's life became inconsistent with his own safety, no idea seems to have occurred to this inveterate ruffian save to murder the person by whom he might himself be any way endangered. Bannatyne, knowing with what sort of men he had to deal, kept on his guard, and by this caution disconcerted more than one attempt to take his life. At length Bannatyne, tiring of this state of insecurity, and in despair of escaping such repeated plots, and also feeling remorse for the crime to which he had been accessory, resolved rather to submit himself to the severity of the law than remain the object of the principal criminal's practices. He surrendered himself to the Earl of Abercorn, and was conveyed to Edinburgh, where he confessed before the king and council all the particulars of the murder of Dalrymple, and the attempt to hide his body by committing it to the sea.

When Bannatyne was confronted with the two Muirs before the Privy Council, they denied with vehemence every part of the evidence he had given, and affirmed that the witness had been bribed to destroy them by a false tale. Bannatyne's behaviour seemed sincere and simple, that of Auchindrane more resolute and crafty. The wretched accomplice fell upon his knees, invoking God to witness that all the land in Scotland could not have bribed him to bring a false accusation against a master whom he had served, loved, and followed in so many dangers, and calling upon Auchindrane to honour God by confessing the crime he had committed. Muir the elder, on the other hand, boldly replied, that he hoped God would not so far forsake him as to permit him to confess a crime of which he was innocent, and exhorted Bannatyne in his turn to confess the practices by which he had been induced to devise such falsehoods against him.

The two Muirs, father and son, were therefore put upon their solemn trial, along with Bannatyne, in 1611, and after a great deal of evidence had been brought in support of Bannatyne's confession, all three were found guilty. The elder Auchindrane was convicted of counselling and directing the murder of Sir Thomas Kennedy of Culleyne, and also of the actual murder of the lad Dalrymple. Bannatyne and the younger Muir were found guilty of the latter crime, and all three were sentenced to

be beheaded. Bannatyne, however, the accomplice, received the king's pardon, in consequence of his voluntary surrender and confession. The two Muirs were both executed. The younger was affected by the remonstrances of the clergy who attended him, and he confessed the guilt of which he was accused. The father also was at length brought to avow the fact, but in other respects died as impenitent as he had lived; and so ended this dark and extraordinary tragedy.

A TALE OF THE PLAGUE IN EDINBURGH.

BY ROBERT CHAMBERS, LL.D.

IN several parts of Scotland, such things are to be found as "tales" of the Plague. Amidst so much human suffering as the events of a pestilence necessarily involved, it is of course to be supposed that, occasionally, circumstances would occur of a peculiarly disastrous and affecting description,—that many loving hearts would be torn asunder, or laid side by side in the grave, many orphans left desolate, and patriarchs bereft of all their descendants, and that cases of so painful a sort as called forth greater compassion at the time, would be remembered, after much of the ordinary details was generally forgotten. The celebrated story of Bessy Bell and Mary Gray is a case in point. So romantic, so mournful a tale, appealing as it does to every bosom, could not fail to be commemorated, even though it had been destitute of the great charm of locality. Neither could such a tale of suffering and horror as that of the Teviotdale shepherd's family ever be forgotten in the district where it occurred,—interesting at it is, has been, and will be, to every successive

generation of mothers, and duly listened to and shuddered at by so many infantine audiences. In the course of our researches, we have likewise picked up a few extraordinary circumstances connected with the last visit paid by the plague to Edinburgh; which, improbable as they may perhaps appear, we believe to be, to a certain extent, allied to truth, and shall now submit them to our readers.

When Edinburgh was afflicted, for the last time, with the pestilence, such was its effect upon the energies of the citizens, and so long was its continuance, that the grass grew on the principal street, and even at the Cross, though that Scottish Rialto was then perhaps the most crowded thoroughfare in Britain. Silence, more than that of the stillest midnight, pervaded the streets during the day. The sunlight fell upon the quiet houses as it falls on a line of sombre and neglected tombstones in some sequestered churchyard—gilding, but not altering, their desolate features. The area of the High Street, on being entered by a stranger,

might have been contemplated with feelings similar to those with which Christian, in the "Pilgrim's Progress," viewed the awful court-yard of Giant Despair; for, as in that well-imagined scene, the very ground bore the marks of wildness and desolation; every window around, like the loopholes of the dungeons in Doubting Castle, seemed to tell its tale of misery within, and the whole seemed to lie prostrate and powerless under the dominion of an unseen demon, which fancy might have conceived as stalking around in a bodily form, leisurely dooming its subjects to successive execution.

When the pestilence was at its greatest height, a strange perplexity began, and not without reason, to take possession of the few physicians and nurses who attended the sick. It was customary for the distempered to die, or, as the rare case happened, to recover, on a particular day after having first exhibited symptoms of illness. This was an understood rule of the plague, which had never been known to fail. All at once, it began to appear that a good many people, especially those who were left alone in their houses by the death or desertion of friends, died before the arrival of the critical day. In some of these cases, not only was the rule of the disease broken, but, what vexed the physicians more, the powers of medicine seemed to have been set at defiance; for several patients of distinction, who had been able to purchase good attendance and were therefore considered as in less than ordinary danger, were found to have expired after taking salutary drugs, and being left with good hopes by their physicians. It almost seemed as if some new disease were beginning to engrift itself upon the pestilence—a new feature rising upon its horrid aspect. Subtle and fatal as it formerly was, it was now inconceivably more so. It could formerly be calculated upon; but it was now quite arbitrary and precarious. Medi-

cine had lost its power over it. God, who created it in its first monstrous form, appeared to have endowed it with an additional sting, against which feeble mortality could present no competent shield. Physicians beheld its new ravages with surprise and despair; and a deeper shade of horror was spread, in consequence, over the public mind.

As an air of more than natural mystery seemed to accompany this truly calamitous turn of affairs, it was, of course, to be expected, in that superstitious age, that many would attribute it to a more than natural cause. By the ministers, it was taken for an additional manifestation of God's wrath, and as such held forth in not a few pulpits, accompanied with all the due exhortations to a better life, which it was not unlikely would be attended with good effect among the thin congregations of haggard and terrified scarecrows, who persisted in meeting regularly at places of worship. The learned puzzled themselves with conjectures as to its probable causes and cures; while the common people gave way to the most wild and fanciful surmises, almost all of which were as far from the truth. The only popular observation worthy of any attention, was that the greater part of those who suffered from this new disease died during the night, and all of them while unattended.

Not many days after the alarm first arose, a poor woman arrested a physician in the street, and desired to confer with him a brief space. He at first shook her off, saying he was at present completely engaged, and could take no new patients. But when she informed him that she did not desire his attendance, and only wished to communicate something which might help to clear up the mystery of the late premature deaths, he stopped and lent a patient ear. She told him that on the previous night, having occasion to leave her house, in

order to visit a sick neighbour, who lay upon a lonely death-bed in the second flat below her own garret, she took a lamp in her hand, that she might the better find her way down. As she descended the stair, which she described as a "turnpike," or spiral one, she heard a low and inexpressibly doleful moan, as if proceeding from the house of her neighbour,—such a moan, she said, as she had ever heard proceed from any of the numerous death-beds it had been her lot to attend. She hastened faster down the stair than her limbs were well able to carry her, under the idea that her friend was undergoing some severe suffering, which she might be able to alleviate. Before, however, she had reached the first landing-place, a noise, as of footsteps, arose from the house of pain, and caused her to apprehend that all was not right in a house which she knew no one ever visited, in that time of desolation, but herself. She quickened her pace still more than before, and soon reached the landing-place at her neighbour's door. Something, as she expressed it, seeming to "swoof" down the stair, like the noise of a full garment brushing the walls of a narrow passage, she drew in the lamp, and looking down beyond it, saw what she conceived to be the dark drapery of the back of a tall human figure, loosely clad, moving, or rather gliding, out of sight, and in a moment gone. So uncertain was she at first of the reality of what she saw, that she believed it to be the shadow of the central pile of the stair gliding downwards as she brought round the light; but the state of matters in the inside of the house soon convinced her, to her horror, that it must have been something more dreadful and real—the unfortunate woman being dead; though as yet it was three days till the time when, according to the old rules of the disease, she might have lived or died. The physician heard this story with astonishment; but as it only

informed his mind, which was not free from superstition, that the whole matter was becoming more and more mysterious, he drew no conclusions from it; but simply observing, with a professional shake of the head, that all was not right in the town, went upon his way.

The old woman, who, of course, could not be expected to let so good a subject of gossip and wonderment lie idle in her mind, like the guinea kept by the Vicar of Wakefield's daughters, forthwith proceeded to dissipate it abroad among her neighbours, who soon (to follow out the idea of the coin) reduced it into still larger and coarser pieces, and paid it away, in that exaggerated form, to a wider circle of neighbours, by whom it was speedily dispersed in various shapes over the whole town. The popular mind, like the ear of a sick man, being then peculiarly sensitive, received the intelligence with a degree of alarm, such as the news of a lost battle has not always occasioned amongst a people; and, as the atmosphere is best calculated for the conveyance of sound during the time of frost, so did the air of the plague seem peculiarly well fitted for the propagation of this fearful report. The whole of the people were impressed, on hearing the story, with a feeling of undefined awe, mixed with horror. The back of a tall figure, in dark long clothes, seen but for a moment! There was a picturesque indistinctness in the description, which left room for the imagination; taken in conjunction, too, with the moan heard at first by the old woman on the stair, and the demise of the sick woman at the very time, it was truly startling. To add to the panic, a report arose next day, that the figure had been seen on the preceding evening, by different persons, flitting about various stairs and alleys, always in the shade, and disappearing immediately after being first perceived. An idea began to prevail that it was the image of Death—Death,

who had thus come in his personated form, to a city which seemed to have been placed so peculiarly under his dominion, in order to execute his office with the greater promptitude. It was thought, if so fantastic a dream may be assigned to the thinking faculty, that the grand destroyer, who, in ordinary times is invisible, might, perhaps, have the power of rendering himself palpable to the sight in cases where he approached his victims under circumstances of peculiar horror ; and this wild imagination was the more fearful, inasmuch as it was supposed that, with the increase of the mortality, he would become more and more distinctly visible, till, perhaps, after having despatched all, he would burst forth in open triumph, and roam at large throughout a city of desolation.

It happened on the second day after the rise of this popular fancy, that an armed ship, of a very singular construction, and manned by a crew of strangely foreign-looking men, entered Leith harbour. It was a Barbary rover ; but the crew showed no intention of hostility to the town of Leith, though at the present pass it would have fallen an easy prey to their arms, being quite as much afflicted with the pestilence as its metropolitan neighbour. A detachment of the crew, comprising one who appeared to be the commander, immediately landed, and proceeded to Edinburgh, which they did not scruple to enter. They inquired for the provost, and, on being conducted to the presence of that dignitary, their chief disclosed their purpose in thus visiting Edinburgh, which was the useful one of supplying it in its present distress with a cargo of drugs, approved in the East for their efficacy against the plague, and a few men who could undertake to administer them properly to the sick. The provost heard this intelligence with overflowing eyes ; for, besides the anxiety he felt about the welfare of the

city, he was especially interested in the health of his daughter, an only child, who happened to be involved in the common calamity. The terms proposed by the Africans were somewhat exorbitant. They demanded to have the half of the wealth of those whom they restored to health. But the provost told them that he believed many of the most wealthy citizens would be glad to employ them on these terms ; and, for his own part, he was willing to sacrifice anything he had, short of his salvation, for the benefit of his daughter. Assured of at least the safety of their persons and goods, the strangers drew from the ship a large quantity of medicines, and began that very evening to attend as physicians those who chose to call them in. The captain—a man in the prime of life, and remarkable amongst the rest for his superior dress and bearing—engaged himself to attend the provost's daughter, who had now nearly reached the crisis of the distemper, and hitherto had not been expected to survive.

The house of Sir John Smith, the provost of Edinburgh, in the year 1645, was situated in the Cap-and-Feather close, an alley occupying the site of the present North Bridge. The bottom of this alley being closed, there was no thoroughfare or egress towards the North Loch ; but the provost's house possessed this convenience, being the tenement which closed the lower extremity, and having a back-door that opened upon an alley to the eastward, namely, Halkerton's Wynd. This house was, at the time we speak of, crammed full of valuable goods, plate, &c., which had been deposited in the provost's hands by many of his afflicted fellow-citizens, under the impression that, if they survived, he was honest enough to restore them unimpaired, and, if otherwise, he was worthy to inherit them. His daughter, who had been seized before it was found possible to remove

her from the town, lay in a little room at the back of the house, which, besides one door opening from the large staircase in the front, had also a more private entry communicating with the narrower and obsolete "turnpike" behind. At that time, little precaution was taken anywhere in Scotland about the locking of doors. To have the door simply closed, so that the fairies could not enter, was in general considered sufficient, as it is at the present day in many remote parts. In Edinburgh, during the time of the plague, the greatest indifference to security of this sort prevailed. In general, the doors were left unlocked from within, in order to admit the cleansers, or any charitable neighbour who might come to minister to the bed-rid sick. This was not exactly the case in Sir John Smith's house ; for the main-door was scrupulously locked, with a view to the safety of the goods committed to his charge. Nevertheless, from neglect, or from want of apprehension, the posterior entrance was afterwards found to have been not so well secured.

The Barbary physician had administered a potion to his patient soon after his admission into the house. He knew that symptoms either favourable or unfavourable would speedily appear, and he therefore resolved to remain in the room in order to watch the result. About midnight, as he sat in a remote corner of the room, looking towards the bed upon which his charge was extended, while a small lamp burned upon a low table between, he was suddenly surprised to observe something like a dark cloud, unaccompanied by any noise, interpose itself slowly and gradually between his eyes and the bed. He at first thought that he was deceived,—that he was beginning to fall asleep,—or that the strange appearance was occasioned by some peculiarity of the light, which, being placed almost directly between him and the bed,

caused him to see the latter object very indistinctly. He was soon undeceived by hearing a noise,—the slightest possible,—and perceiving something like motion in the ill-defined lineaments of the apparition. "Gracious Heaven !" thought he, "can this be the angel of death hovering over his victim, preparing to strike the mortal blow, and ready to receive the departing soul into the inconceivable recesses of its awful form?" It almost appeared as if the cloud stooped over the bed for the performance of this task. Presently, the patient uttered a half-suppressed sigh, and then altogether ceased the regular respirations, which had hitherto been monotonous and audible throughout the room. The awe-struck attendant could contain himself no longer, but permitted a sort of cry to escape him, and started to his feet. The cloud instantly, as it were, rose from its inclined posture over the bed, turned hastily round, and, in a moment contracting itself into a human shape, glided softly, but hastily, from the apartment. "Ha !" thought the African, "I have known such personages as this in Aleppo. These angels of death are sometimes found to be mortal themselves—I shall pursue and try." He, therefore, quickly followed the phantom through the private door by which it had escaped, not forgetting to seize his semicircular sword in passing the table where it lay. The stair was dark and steep ; but he kept his feet till he reached the bottom. Casting, then, a hasty glance around him, he perceived a shadow vanish from the moon-lit ground, at an angle of the house, and instantly started forward in the pursuit. He soon found himself in the open wynd above-mentioned, along which he supposed the mysterious object to have gone. All here was dark ; but being certain of the course adopted by the pursued party, he did not hesitate a moment in plunging headlong down its steep profundity. He was con-

firmed in his purpose by immediately afterwards observing, at some distance in advance, a small jet of moonlight, proceeding from a side alley, obscured for a second by what he conceived to be the transit of a large dark object. This he soon also reached, and finding that his own person caused a similar obscurity, he was confirmed in his conjecture that the apparition bore a substantial form. Still forward and downward he boldly rushed, till, reaching an open area at the bottom, part of which was lighted by the moon, he plainly saw, at the distance of about thirty yards before him, the figure as of a tall man, loosely enveloped in a prodigious cloak, gliding along the ground, and apparently making for a small bridge, which at this particular place crossed the drain of the North Loch, and served as a communication with the village called the Mutries Hill. He made directly for the fugitive, thinking to overtake him almost before he could reach the bridge. But what was his surprise, when in a moment the flying object vanished from his sight, as if it had sunk into the ground, and left him alone and objectless in his headlong pursuit. It was possible that it had fallen into some concealed well or pit, but this he was never able to discover.

Bewildered and confused, he at length returned to the provost's house, and re-entered the apartment of the sick maiden. To his delight and astonishment he found her already in a state

of visible convalescence, with a gradually deepening glow of health diffusing itself over her cheek. Whether his courage and fidelity had been the means of scaring away the evil demon it is impossible to say; but certain it is, that the ravages of the plague began soon afterwards to decline in Edinburgh, and at length died away altogether.

The conclusion of this singular traditional story bears that the provost's daughter, being completely restored to health, was married to the foreigner who had saved her life. This seems to have been the result of an affection which they had conceived for each other during the period of her convalescence. The African, becoming joint-heir with his wife of the provost's vast property, abandoned his former piratical life, became, it is said, a douce Presbyterian, and settled down for the remainder of his days in Edinburgh. The match turned out exceedingly well; and it is even said that the foreigner became so assimilated with the people of Edinburgh, to whom he had proved so memorable a benefactor, that he held at one time an office of considerable civic dignity and importance. Certain it is, that he built for his residence a magnificent "land" near the head of the Canongate, upon the front of which he caused to be erected a statue of the emperor of Barbary, in testimony of the respect he still cherished for his native country; and this memorial yet remains in its original niche, as a subsidiary proof of the verity of the above relation.

THE PROBATIONER'S FIRST SERMON.

BY DANIEL GORRIE.

ON a cold March evening, and in the metropolis of Scotland, I received licence as a probationer. The reverend fathers of the Presbytery were so satisfied with my orthodoxy that they gave me most cordially the right hand of fellowship, and warmly wished me success. I had half-anticipated a reprimand for heretical tendencies ; but as no censure was uttered, I was at once overcome by their kindness, and charmed with their unexpected liberality. I hastened home to receive the congratulations of my friends, and then repaired to a clothier's for a suit of canonical blacks. My mother had already provided a boxful of white cravats sufficient to supply the whole bench of bishops. To err is human, and it is also human for a humble man to feel considerably elated in certain circumstances, and at certain times.

I need not be ashamed to confess that a new dignity seemed to rest upon me, like the mantle of the prophet, on that eventful evening. I saw the reflection of my face on the bowl of a silver spoon, and wondered at the resemblance it bore to the bold, heroic countenance of Edward Irving. High were my hopes, and few were my fears, for I only expected to speak and conquer. The responsibilities of the profession were great, I knew, but they only cast their shadow before. The kind of life on which I was about to enter possessed all the attractions of novelty. I was to exchange passivity for action—the quiet of the cloister for the stir of the field. Yet, while thus I thought of the battle, and made my vows, the still picture of a rural manse, girdled with incense-breathing flower-plots, and shaded with murmuring trees, stole upon my slumbers ere I awoke at

the dawn of the next day—a vision, alas ! too often resembling the unreal beauty of the mirage in the desert.

It may be pardoned in a novitiate, standing on the threshold, if I saw only the sunny side of preacher-life. Spring was coming, like Miriam and her maidens, with timbrels and with dances, and the golden summer-tide was following in her wake, and I knew that I would look on many lovely scenes, receive kindness from strangers, enjoy the hospitality of the humble, and haply sow some seeds of goodness and truth in receptive hearts.

I had frequently heard strange stories about preachers, and several times I had met some curious specimens of the class. One, it was said, travelled over the country with a sermon and a-half and a tobacco-pipe. Another, it was averred, carried neither parchments nor portmanteau, went gadding abroad, and was in fact the generalissimo of gossips. A third poked his nose into presses, supped jelly and jam, pocketed lumps of sugar, and performed other absurdities not at all creditable to his cloth. I had also learned from ministers' wives in the country, that some were as unsocial and morose as turnkeys, and others quite the reverse—lively young fellows, who could rock the cradle, and keep all the children in high glee. It was necessary for me, then, I felt, to be circumspect, to abstain from all eccentricities, to be sociable among social people, and dignified when occasion required. Experience soon taught me that a joke from clerical lips sounds like profanity in the ears of the rigidly righteous. A kind friend told me to beware of elders who wished to discuss the doctrine of probation, and to avoid walking arm-in-arm with any rural beauty.

"Were you, in your unsuspecting innocence," he said, "to commit this last enormity, the village gossips would tell it to the beadle, the beadle to the managers, the managers to the elders, and your glory would depart."

The advice was a wise one, as I afterwards found; but gallantry is more a characteristic of youth than prudence.

I had prepared a considerable supply of discourses. They were elaborately written, and I looked with paternal affection upon the companions of my future wanderings. I shunned those dry doctrinal discussions which shed so sweet an opiate over the eyes of old, young, and middle-aged. The topics selected were such as I believed would interest and instruct all classes of people. I had enlarged upon the zeal and self-sacrifice of the sainted men of old, pictured the Holy One silent in the death chamber, and weeping at the tomb, and drawn illustrations from the heavens above, and the earth beneath. Something fresh was needed, I thought—a Christianity rich in blossoms as in fruit.

I received an appointment for the first Sabbath after licence, and on Saturday afternoon I was rattling along Princes' Street in the Queensferry omnibus. A small town across the Firth, in the kingdom of Fife, not far from the coast, was my destination. Although the sermon I was to deliver on the morrow had been well committed to memory, and frequently declaimed during the week, yet I found myself conning it over again ere we had crossed the Dean Bridge, and certain passages became mysteriously blended in my mind with the images of Craigmoray and Corstorphine. Then I began to wonder if the other passengers suspected I was a preacher on my maiden expedition. One woman was occupied in gazing very fondly upon the face of a dozing child three months old; a red-faced, purple-nosed old gentleman was sucking

the round head of a walking-stick; a stout elderly lady seemed to find the leathern cushion very uncomfortable, since of her down-sitting and up-rising there was no end; a young gentleman of the Tittlebat Titmouse tribe breathed heavily, and at intervals snored; and a young lady, my *vis-a-vis* in the opposite corner, was the only one who seemed really to be aware of my presence, and the only one who appeared willing to break the unsocial silence. I remembered my friend's advice, and was somewhat afraid to speak. Besides, heads, and particulars, and practical applications, were making such a thoroughfare of my mind, that there was considerable danger of committing absurd mistakes in conversation. I became really sorry for the young lady, she looked at me so inquiringly, and seemed so anxious that I should speak. There was a keen frost in the air, and one or two outsiders were flapping their hands across their shoulders—might I not say that the afternoon was cold? Gray-white clouds were gathering from horizon to horizon and dimming the day—might I not suggest the possibility of snow? Suddenly the light wavering crystals slid down the window-glass, and with uplifted eyebrows and look of innocent surprise, the fair young traveller exclaimed, "Oh! it snows."

"So it does, ma'am," I rejoined, and spoke no more.

She might think of me that evening as very silent or very surly; but she no doubt changed her opinion next day, for I saw her sitting in the front gallery of the church when I rose to give out the first psalm.

In crossing the ferry, I thought not of the royal dames and princely pageants that so often in the days of other years passed to and from the shores of Fife. The waters of the Forth were dreary enough. Inchcolm and the opposite coast were shrouded from view in the streaming skirts of the snow-clouds.

I rolled myself up in a corner of the boat where no deacon's eye could intrude, and warmed my heart with a cigar. Then some limping fiend whispered in my ears the awful words, "What if you should stick?" Once I had witnessed an unfortunate being in that painful predicament in the pulpit. I had marked, with sickening apprehensions, the string of unconnected sentences, the hesitation, the palor overspreading his face, the terrible stammer, the convulsive clutch, the pause, the sudden gulp, the dead stop, and portentous silence. A "stickit minister," like Dominie Sampson, is nothing to a preacher who "sticks." It was a horrid idea. I resisted the fiend, knit my brow, clenched my fist, and determined to speak or die. "Always keep your mouth open," was the charge of a learned divine to his son, and the words afforded me much consolation.

The night was falling fast, and the snow was falling faster when I reached the outskirts of the little inland town where I had been appointed to officiate. Here my rapid march was arrested by an elderly man who inquired if I was the expected preacher, and receiving an answer in the affirmative, he relieved me of my portmanteau, which contained my precious parchment, and led the way to my lodgings. He gave me to understand that he was the beadle, and that I was to lodge with Mrs M'Bain, who kept a small grocery shop, and had a room to spare in her house. The congregation, with much saving grace, had let the manse until a new minister was obtained. Old John, like the great proportion of country beadles, was a simple, decent man, and a sort of character in his way. He was particularly inquisitive, and asked me some very plain questions as we trudged along the narrow street, getting gradually whitened by the falling snow. He told me that my predecessor on the previous Sabbath was a very clever young man,

but only a "wee thocht new-fangled." From further inquiry I found that the learned Theban had been astonishing John and several members of the congregation by describing the revolution of the earth on its axis.

"Noo, sir," said the worthy beadle, "can ye tell me, if the world is aye whirlin' round aboot, what's the reason we never come to the warm countries?"

I endeavoured to make the matter plain to his apprehension by supposing a rotatory motion of the human head, and the nose always maintaining its dignified position in the centre between the right ear and the left—an illustration which honest John did not seem to regard as satisfactory in the slightest degree.

Mrs M'Bain's house was of a very humble description; but she appeared to be a tidy woman, and the room allotted to me, though small, was clean and comfortable. John put down my portmanteau on a chair, with the mien and manner of one who has done his duty, and informed me that one of the elders and the precentor would likely call in a short time. For the precentor I was perfectly prepared, knowing well the psalms that would best suit my discourse; but I was not so sure what motive an elder could have for visiting me on a Saturday night. I inwardly hoped, at least, that if he did make his appearance, he would have the good sense not to trouble me long with his presence or his conversation, as I was again anxious to rehearse my discourse to silent chairs and an attentive table.

When Mrs M'Bain was placing the tea-dishes on the table, she seemed disposed for a little talk, while I, on the contrary, was not at all in a communicative mood. However, she persevered, and drew me on by degrees, until at last she brought a series of queries to a climax by asking if I had been long a preacher. Now, this was a most absurd question for me to answer in my pecu-

liar circumstances. If the people knew that I had never "wagged my head in a poupit" before, they would be sure to listen to me with the most dreadful silence, so that the slightest stammer would be multiplied and magnified by a hundred echoes. What was to be done? The question must be answered, and the truth must be told, despite the consequences. Mustering up courage, I told my landlady how the matter stood. Astonished she was, as might naturally have been expected. She uplifted her eyebrows, opened wide her eyes, drew a long breath, and said—"Dearie me, sir, ye'll be awfu' feared!" With this ejaculation, which afforded me little consolation indeed, Mrs M'Bain left the apartment, and I knew that the tidings would be over the town, and talked about at every fireside in less than twenty minutes. It could not be helped; courage and resignation alone were required.

I had just finished swallowing in haste three cups of very hot tea, when the precentor entered. He was a man past middle age, with a countenance somewhat grim and gaunt, and a very unmusical mouth. His hair was sandy-coloured, and he was Sawney all over. I saw at once, from his steady stare, and the peculiar expression of his face, that Mrs M'Bain had communicated to him the very pleasant intelligence that the new arrival was a "green hand." He was not long in making me know that he was aware of the fact, although he did so in a very cautious, provoking kind of style. When the ice was fairly broken, he said, "It's a kittle thing standin' up afore an audience the first time. I mind fine yet what an awfu' state I was in when I first sang i' the desk. I kent the Auld Hunderd as weel as I kent my mither; but I wasna lang begun when I ran awa' wi' the harrows." This kind of talk was rapidly becoming unendurable, and I entertained anything but a Christian senti-

ment of brotherly love towards the conductor of the psalmody.

"How long have you acted as precentor," I enquired, anxious to change the current of conversation.

"I've precented in oor kirk," he replied, "for twunty years, and, barrin' three days last summer, I've never missed a Sabbath."

"That is very extraordinary," I rejoined; "and what was wrong with you last summer?"

"Weel, sir, ye see I was howkin' tatties for the denner in oor yaird ae day, when I coupit ower a skep by mistake, and I was awfu' stung by bees."

"Dear me," I rejoined (for I could not resist such a favourable opportunity of stinging him again), "it was curious how the bees should have taken you for a drone!"

This remark had the desired effect. The precentor soon took himself off, and I was left in undisputed possession of the room. I had offended the beadle, and insulted the precentor—how was it possible that I could preach with acceptance to the people? I became nervous lest the elder also should enter, for I was perfectly persuaded that I could not escape incurring his reprobation by some unfortunate reply.

As the night wore on, my trepidation increased. I paced up and down the room, repeating and re-repeating my discourse from beginning to end, and from the end to the beginning. Every period, colon, hyphen, point of exclamation, point of interrogation, and comma was engraved upon my mind, and yet I was not satisfied. Something might escape me—some sounding sentence might take wings and flee away. I heard Mrs M'Bain listening at times behind the door when I went humming and thrumming across the room; and I felt a strong inclination to call her in, and punish her by making her act the part of a popular audience. I cooled

down somewhat before bedtime, and, at my landlady's request, retired early to bed.

"A gude sleep," she said, "is the forerunner of a good sermon."

"Yes," I rejoined, "and a good sleep is the ordinary accompaniment of a bad one."

Mrs M'Bain chuckled, and looked as if she thought there was something promising in the young man after all.

To bed I went, but not to slumber, knowing well that sleep, like some eccentric daughters of Eve, must be won without being wooed. I did not try to "fall over." None but the rankest fool ever thinks of perpetrating such absurdity. I commenced for the five hundredth time—what else could I do?—to con over my discourse. I had just finished the introduction, without missing a syllable, when—horror of horrors!—the first head had vanished—evaporated—gone to some outrageous limbo and could not, would not be recalled. What was to be done? I sat up in bed—a villainous crib it was—and the perspiration stood beaded on my brow. The tingling darkness filled the room; the snow-flakes fussed on the window panes. Mrs M'Bain was in bed; the candle was out; there were no lucifers; my precious manuscript was under my pillow; the missing head was there, but I could neither see nor seize it. It was a *caput mortuum*. I cannot describe the agony that I endured, the feeling of despair that I experienced. My heart beat loudly, and the inexorable clock tick-ticked, as if everything in the world were going on with the utmost smoothness and regularity. I must have sat for an hour groping about in my benighted brain for my lost head. But sleep at length came, and fantastic dreams, born of fear and excitement, took possession of me. I thought that I stood on Mars Hill, and that around me was gathered a great crowd of Stoics, Epicureans,

Methodists, Mormons, and Mahomedans. They listened attentively for a time, but as soon as I had finished the introduction to my discourse, they immediately commenced to grin and make grimaces, shouting, howling, roaring like legions of demons. In the twinkling of an eye, the scene changed, and I stood in the centre of a vast camp-meeting in the backwoods of America. Negroes and Red Indians were there as well as stalwart planters with their wives and families. A hymn, pealed with a sea-like sound from a thousand voices, had just died away, and I was preparing to address the mighty multitude, when a sudden storm came crashing down among the woods, and the assemblage was scattered abroad like the leaves of autumn. I was tossed throughout the night from one wildered dream to another, and finally awoke in the morning rather jaded than refreshed. With the return of consciousness, however, returned the lost head, and I was delighted to discover before rising that my memory was master of my discourse.

The morning wore on, stiller for the snow that lay one or two inches deep on the ground. The hour of service approached, the bells began to sound; I never heard them pealing so loudly before, even in the largest cities. My heart beat to the beating of the bells. At last the beadle came, cool, calm, imperturbable, hoisted the pulpit Bible under his arm, and signified to me, with an easy inclination of his head, that all was now ready. Mrs M'Bain was standing in the passage as we came out of the room, holding the door-key in one hand, and her Bible wrapped in a white pocket handkerchief in the other. I walked along the street as steadily and sedately as my perturbation would permit, and all the little boys and girls, I thought, knew that I was to preach my first sermon that day. There was a death-like stillness in the

church when I entered. My look was concentrated on the pulpit, but I knew that every eye in the church was fixed upon the untried preacher. I managed to get through the introductory services with more fluency and calmness than I anticipated, only I invariably found myself conning over the first head of my discourse while the assembled worshippers were singing the psalms. The precentor *was* a drone. Even that afforded me some satisfaction, although the unmelodious tones agitated still more my excited nervous system. At the close of the second psalm, the time of my great trial came. I rose and announced the text with great deliberation. Then every eye was fixed upon me; the moment was awful; the silence was dreadful. The ready manner in which the first dozen of sentences came to my recollection made me feel somewhat calm, comfortable, and composed; but a sudden sense of the peculiar nature of my situation, the consciousness that all the people knew it was my first appearance in public, disturbed my equanimity and shook my self-

possession. A dizziness came over me; the congregation revolved around the pulpit. I grasped the Bible, and declaimed vehemently in order if possible to recover myself; but from the beginning of the first head to the last application, although I must have adhered to my manuscript, I was speaking like one in a dream, not master of myself, the will passive, and memory alone awake. When I concluded the last period, I could scarcely believe that I had preached my discourse. The weakness of my limbs told me of the struggle. On leaving the church I overheard some remarks concerning myself pass between two of the officials. "He's a brisk bit birkie that," quoth the beadle.

"'Od ay," responded the precentor, but "he has a bee in his bannet.'"

Sweet reader, if you are studying for the Church, do not be deterred by vain fears from prosecuting your labours. It is a glorious thing to succeed, even when you are unconscious of your success, and thus it happened with "My First Sermon."

THE CRIMES OF RICHARD HAWKINS.

BY THOMAS AIRD.

WHEN a young man, Richard Hawkins was guilty of the heinous crime of betraying the daughter of a respectable farmer in the west of Galloway, of the name of Emily Robson. As he yet loved the injured maiden, he would have married her, but in this he was determinedly opposed by her relatives, and particularly by her only brother, betwixt whom and himself an inveterate hostility had, from various causes, been growing up since their earliest boyhood. From remorse partly, and shame

and disappointment, and partly from other causes, Hawkins hereupon left his home and went abroad; but after making a considerable sum of money he returned to Scotland, determined to use every remonstrance to win over Emily's friends to allow him yet by marriage to make reparation to the gentle maiden, the remembrance of whose beauty and faithful confiding spirit had unceasingly haunted him in a foreign land. He arrived first at Glasgow, and proceeded thence to Edin-

burgh, where he purposed to stay a week or a fortnight before going southward to his native county, in which also Emily Robson resided.

During his stay in the metropolis, having been one evening invited to sup at the house of a gentleman, originally from the same county with himself, scarcely had he taken his seat in his host's parlour, when Emily's brother entered, and, instantly recognizing him, advanced with a face of grim wrath, denounced him as a villain, declared he would not sit a moment in his company, and to make good his declaration, instantly turned on his heel and left the house. The violent spirit of Hawkins was in a moment stung to madness by this rash and unseasonable insolence, which was offered him, moreover, before a number of gentlemen ; he rose, craved their leave for a moment, that he might follow, and show Mr Robson his mistake ; and sallying out of the house, without his hat, he overtook his aggressor on the street, tapped him on the shoulder, and thus bespoke him, with a grim smile :—“ Why, sir, give me leave to propound to you that this same word and exit of yours are most preciously insolent. With your leave, now, I must have you back, gently to unsay me a word or two ; or, by heaven ! this night your blood shall wash out the imputation !”

“ This hour—this hour ! ” replied Robson, in a hoarse compressed whisper ; “ my soul craves to grapple with you, and put our mutual affair to a mortal arbitrament. Hark ye, Hawkins, you are a stranger in this city, I presume, and cannot reasonably be expected easily to provide yourself with a second ; moreover, no one would back such a villain ;—now, will you follow me this moment to my lodgings, accept from my hand one of a pair of pistols, and let us, without farther formality, retire to a convenient place, and do ourselves a pleasure and a jus-

tice. I am weary of living under the same sun with you, and if I can shed your foul blood beneath yon chaste stars of God, I would willingly die for it. Dare you follow me ?—and, quickly, before those fellows think of looking after us ? ”

To Hawkins' boiling heart of indignation 'twas no hard task so to follow, and the above proposal of Robson was strictly and instantly followed up. We must notice here particularly, that, as the parties were about to leave the house, a letter was put into Robson's hand, who, seeing that it was from his mother, and bore the outward notification of mourning, craved Hawkins' permission to read it, which he did with a twinkling in his eye, and a working, as of deep grief, in the muscles of his face ; but in a minute he violently crushed the letter, put it into his pocket, and, turning anew to his foe with glaring eyes of anger, told him that all was ready. And now we shall only state generally, that within an hour from the first provocation of the evening, this mortal and irregular duel was settled, and left Robson shot through the body by his antagonist.

No sooner did Hawkins see him fall, than horror and remorse for his deed rushed upon him ; he ran to the prostrate youth, attempted to raise him up, but dared not offer pity or ask forgiveness, for which his soul yet panted. The wounded man rejected his assistance—waved him off, and thus faintly but fearfully spoke :—“ Now, mine enemy ! I will tell you, that you may sooner know the curse of God, which shall for ever cling and warp itself round all the red cords of your heart. That letter from my mother, which you saw me read, told me of the death of that sister Emily whom I so loved ; whom you—oh, God !—who never recovered from your villainy. And my father, too !—Off, fiend, nor mock me ! You shall not so triumph—you shall not see me die ! ” So saying, the wounded

youth, who was lying on his back, with his pale writhen features upturned, and dimly seen in the twilight, with a convulsive effort now threw himself round, with his face upon the grass.

In a fearful agony stood Hawkins, twisting his hands, not knowing whether again to attempt raising his victim, or to run to the city for a surgeon. The former he at length did, and found no resistance; for, alas! the unhappy youth was dead. The appearance of two or three individuals now making towards the bloody spot, which was near the suburbs of the town, and to which, in all probability, they had been drawn by the report of the pistols, roused Hawkins, for the first time, to a sense of his own danger. He quickly left the ground, dashed through the fields, and, without distinctly calculating his route, instinctively turned towards his native district.

As he proceeded onwards, he began to consider the bearings of his difficult situation, and at last resolved to hasten on through the country, to lay his case before his excellent friend Frank Dillon, who was the only son of a gentleman in the western parts of Galloway, and who, he knew, was at present residing with his father. Full of the most riotous glee, and nimble-witted as Mercutio, Frank, he was aware, could be no less gravely wise as an adviser in a difficult emergency, and he determined, in the present case, to be wholly ruled by his opinion. Invigorated from thus having settled for himself a definite course, he walked swiftly forward through the night, which shone with the finest beauty of the moon. Yet what peace to the murderer, whose red title not the fairest duellist, who has slain a human being, can to his own conscience reduce? The cold glittering leaves on the trees, struck with a quick, momentary gust, made him start as he passed; and the shadowy foot and figure of the lover, coming round from

the back window of the lone cottage, was to his startled apprehension the avenger of blood at hand. As he looked afar along the glittering road, the black fir trees upon the edge of the moor seemed men coming running down to meet him; and the long howl of some houseless cur, and the distant hoof of the traveller, which struck his listening ear with two or three beatings, seemed all in the track of pursuit and vengeance.

Morning came, and to the weary fugitive was agreeably cloudy; but the sun rose upon him in the forenoon, shining from between the glassy, glistening clouds with far greater heat than it does from a pure blue sky. Hawkins had now crossed many a broad acre of the weary moorlands, fatigued and thirsty, his heart beating in his ears, and not a drop of water that he could see to sprinkle the dry pulses of his bosom, when he came to a long morass, which barred his straightforward path. His first business was to quench his thirst from a dull stank, overgrown with paddowpipe, and black with myriads of tadpoles. There, finding himself so faint from fatigue that he could not brook the idea of going round by the end of the moss, and being far less able to make his way through the middle of it, by leaping from *hagg* to *hagg*, he threw himself down on the sunny side of some long reeds, and fell fast asleep.

He was waked by the screaming of lapwings, and the noise of a neighbouring bittern, to a feeling of violent throbbing, headache, and nausea, which were probably owing to the sun's having beat upon him whilst he lay asleep, aggravated by the reflection from the reeds. He arose, but finding himself quite unable to pursue his journey, again threw himself down on a small airy brow of land, to get what breeze might be stirring abroad. There were several companies of people at work digging peats in the moss, and one

party now sat down very near him to their dinner. One of them, a young woman, had passed so near him, as to be able to guess, from his countenance, that he was unwell ; and in a few minutes, with the fine charity of womanhood, she came to him with some food, of which, to satisfy her kindness, rather than his own hunger, he ate a little. The air changed in the afternoon, and streaming clouds of hail crossed over that wild country, yet he lay still. Party after party left the moss, and yet he was there. He made, indeed, a show of leaving the place at a quick rate, to disappoint the fears of the people who had seen him at noon, and who, as they again came near to gather up their supernumerary clothes, were evidently perplexed on his account, which they showed by looking first towards him and then at each other. It was all he could do to get quite out of their sight beyond a little eminence ; and there, once more, he lay down in utter prostration of mind and body.

Twilight began to darken upon the pools* of that desolate place. The wild birds were gone to their healthy nests, all save the curlew, whose bravura was still sung over the fells, and borne far away into the dim and silent night. At length a tall, powerful-looking man came stepping through the moss, and as he passed near the poor youth, asked, in slow speech, who he was. In the reaction of nature, Hawkins was, in a moment, anxious about his situation, and replied to him that he had fallen sick on his way, and was unable to go in quest of a resting-place for the night. Approaching and turning himself round to the youth as he arose, the genius of the place had him on his back in a moment, and went off with him carelessly and in silence over the heath. In about half an hour they came to a lonely cottage, which the kind creature entered ; and, setting the young man down, without the least appearance of

fatigue on his part, "Here, gudewife," said he, "is a bairn t'ye, that I hae foun' i' the moss : now, let us see ye be gude to him." Either this injunction was very effective, or it was not at all necessary ; for, had the youth been her own son, come from a far country to see her, this hostess of the cottage could not have treated him more kindly. From his little conversation during the evening, her husband, like most very bulky men, appeared to be of dull intellect ; but there was a third personage in the composition of his household, a younger brother, a very little man,—the flower of the flock,—who made ample amends for his senior brother's deficiencies as a talker. A smattering of Church-history had filled his soul with a thousand stories of persecution and martyrdom, and, from some old history of America, he had gained a little knowledge of Upper Canada, for which, Hawkins was during the night repeatedly given to understand, he was once on the very point of setting out, an abiding embryo of bold travel, which, in his own eye, seemed to invest him with all the honours and privileges of *bona fide* voyagers. His guest had a thousand questions put to him on these interesting topics, less for his answers, it was evident, than for an opportunity to the little man of setting forth his own information. All this was tolerably fair ; but it was truly disgusting when the little oracle took the Bible after supper, and, in place of his elder brother, who was otherwise also the head of the family, performed the religious services of the evening, presuming to add a comment to the chapter which he read ; to enforce which, his elbow was drawn back to the sharpest angle of edification, from which, ever and anon unslinging itself like a shifting rhomboid, it forced forward the stiff information in many a pompous instalment. The pertinacious forefinger was at work too ; and before it trembled

the mystic Babylon, which, in a side argument, that digit was uplifted to denounce. Moreover, the whole lecture was given in a squeaking, pragmatic voice, which sounded like the sharpening of thatchers' knives.

Next morning the duellist renewed his journey, hoping against eveningtide to reach Dillon's house, which he guessed could not now be more than forty miles distant. About mid-afternoon, as he was going through a small hamlet of five or six cottages, he stepped into one of them, and requested a little water to drink. There was a hushed solemnity, he could see in a moment, throughout the little apartment into which, rather too unceremoniously, he had entered; and a kind-looking matron, in a dark robe, whispered in his ear, as she gave him a porringer of sweet water, with a little oatmeal sprinkled upon it, that an only daughter of the house, a fine young woman, was lying "a corpse." Without noticing his presence, and indeed with her face hid, sat the mother doubtless of the maiden, heedless of the whispered consolations of two or three officious matrons, and racking in that full and intense sorrow with which strangers cannot intermeddle. The sloping beams of the declining sun shone beautifully in through a small lattice, illuminating a half-decayed nosegay of flowers which stood on the sunny whitewashed sill—emblem of a more sorrowful decay!—and after traversing the middle of the apartment, with a thin deep bar of light, peopled by a maze of dancing motes, struck into the white bed, where lay something covered up and awfully indistinct, like sanctified thing not to be gazed at, which the fugitive's fascinated eye yet tried to shape into the elegant body of the maiden, as she lay before her virgin sheets purer than they, with the salt above her still and unvexed bosom. The restricted din of boys at play—for that buoyant age is yet truly reverential, and feels

most deeply the solemn occasion of death—was heard faint and aloof from the house of mourning. This, and the lonely chirrup of a single sparrow from the thatch; the soft purring of the cat at the sunny pane; the muffled tread of the mourners over the threshold; and the audible grief of that poor mother, seemed, instead of interruption, rather parts of the solemn stillness.

As Hawkins was going out, after lingering a minute in this sacred interior, he met, in the narrow passage which led to the door, a man with the coffin, on the lid of which he read, as it was pushed up to his very face, "Emily Robson, aged 22." The heart of the murderer—the seducer—was in a moment as if steeped in the benumbing waters of petrifaction; he was horrified; he would fain have passed, but could not for want of room; and as the coffin was not to be withdrawn in accommodation to him, he was pushed again into the interior of the cottage to encounter a look of piercing recognition from Emily's afflicted mother, who had started up on hearing the hollow grating of the coffin as it struck occasionally on the walls of the narrow entrance. "Take him away—take him away—take him away!" she screamed, when she saw Hawkins, and pressed her face down on the white bed of death. As for the youth, who was fearfully conscious of another bloody woe which had not yet reached her heart, and of which he was still the author, and who saw, moreover, that this poor mother was now come to poverty, probably from his own first injury against the peace of her family, he needed not to be told to depart. With conscience, that truest conducting-rod, flashing its moral electricities of shame and fear, and with knees knocking against each other, he stumbled out of the house, and making his way by chance to an idle quarry, overgrown with weeds, he there threw himself down, with his face on the

ground. In this situation he lay the whole night and all next forenoon ; and in the afternoon—for he had occasionally risen to look for the assembling of the funeral train—he joined the small group who carried his Emily to the churchyard, and saw her young body laid in the grave. Oh ! who can cast away carelessly, like a useless thing, the finely-moulded clay, perfumed with the lingering beauty of warm motions, sweet graces, and young charities ! But had not the young man, think ye, ten-fold reason to weep for her whom he now saw laid down within the dark shadow of the grave ?

In the evening, he found his way to Frank Dillon's ; met his friend by chance at a little distance from his father's house, and told him at once his unhappy situation. " My father," replied Frank, " cannot be an adviser here, because he is a Justice of the Peace. But he has been at London for some time, and I do not expect him home till to-morrow ; so you can go with me to our house for this night, where we shall deliberate what next must be done in this truly sad affair of yours. Come on."

It is unnecessary for us to explain at length the circumstances which frustrated the friendly intentions of Dillon,

and which enabled the officers of justice to trace Hawkins to his place of concealment. They arrived that very evening ; and, notwithstanding the efforts of Frank to save his friend, secured the unhappy duellist, who, within two days afterwards, found himself in Edinburgh, securely lodged in jail.

The issue of Hawkins' trial was that he was condemned to death as a murderer. This severe sentence of the law was, however, commuted into that of banishment for seven years. But he never again returned to his native country. And it must be told of him also, that no happiness ever shone upon this after-life of his. Independent of his first crime, which brought a beautiful young woman prematurely to the grave, he had broken rashly " into the bloody house of life," and, in the language of Holy Writ, " slain a young man to his hurt."

Oh ! for that still and quiet conscience —those third heavens within a man—wherein he can soar within himself and be at peace, where the image of God shines down, never dislimned nor long hid by those wild racks and deep continents of gloom which come over the soul of the blood-guilty man !

THE HEADSTONE.

BY PROFESSOR WILSON.

THE coffin was let down to the bottom of the grave, the planks were removed from the heaped-up brink, the first rattling clods had struck their knell, the quick shovelling was over, and the long, broad, skilfully cut pieces of turf were aptly joined together, and trimly laid by the beating spade, so that the newest mound in the church-

yard was scarcely distinguishable from those that were grown over by the undisturbed grass and daisies of a luxuriant spring. The burial was soon over ; and the party, with one consenting motion, having uncovered their heads in decent reverence of the place and occasion, were beginning to separate, and about to leave the churchyard.

Here some acquaintances, from distant parts of the parish, who had not had an opportunity of addressing each other in the house that had belonged to the deceased, nor in the course of the few hundred yards that the little procession had to move over from his bed to his grave, were shaking hands, quietly but cheerfully, and inquiring after the welfare of each other's families. There, a small knot of neighbours were speaking, without exaggeration, of the respectable character which the deceased had borne, and mentioning to one another little incidents of his life, some of them so remote as to be known only to the grayheaded persons of the group; while a few yards farther removed from the spot, were standing together parties who discussed ordinary concerns, altogether unconnected with the funeral, such as the state of the markets, the promise of the season, or change of tenants; but still with a sobriety of manner and voice that was insensibly produced by the influence of the simple ceremony now closed, by the quiet graves around, and the shadow of the spire and gray walls of the house of God.

Two men yet stood together at the head of the grave, with countenances of sincere but unimpassioned grief. They were brothers, the only sons of him who had been buried. And there was something in their situation that naturally kept the eyes of many directed upon them for a longer time, and more intently, than would have been the case had there been nothing more observable about them than the common symptoms of a common sorrow. But these two brothers, who were now standing at the head of their father's grave, had for some years been totally estranged from each other, and the only words that had passed between them, during all that time, had been uttered within a few days past, during the necessary preparations for the old man's funeral.

No deep and deadly quarrel was between these brothers, and neither of them could distinctly tell the cause of this unnatural estrangement. Perhaps dim jealousies of their father's favour—selfish thoughts that will sometimes force themselves into poor men's hearts respecting temporal expectations—un-accommodating manners on both sides—taunting words that mean little when uttered, but which rankle and fester in remembrance—imagined opposition of interests, that, duly considered, would have been found one and the same—these, and many other causes, slight when single, but strong when rising up together in one baneful band, had gradually but fatally infected their hearts, till at last they who in youth had been seldom separate, and truly attached, now met at market, and, miserable to say, at church, with dark and averted faces, like different clansmen during a feud.

Surely if anything could have softened their hearts towards each other, it must have been to stand silently, side by side, while the earth, stones, and clods, were falling down upon their father's coffin. And, doubtless, their hearts were so softened. But pride, though it cannot prevent the holy affections of nature from being felt, may prevent them from being shown; and these two brothers stood there together, determined not to let each other know the mutual tenderness that, in spite of them, was gushing up in their hearts, and teaching them the unconfessed folly and wickedness of their causeless quarrel.

A headstone had been prepared, and a person came forward to plant it. The elder brother directed him how to place it—a plain stone, with a sand-glass, skull, and cross-bones, chiselled not rudely, and a few words inscribed. The younger brother regarded the operation with a troubled eye, and said, loudly enough to be heard by several of the bystanders,

"William, this was not kind in you ;—you should have told me of this. I loved my father as well as you could love him. You were the elder, and, it may be, the favourite son ; but I had a right in nature to have joined you in ordering this headstone, had I not?"

During these words, the stone was sinking into the earth, and many persons who were on their way from the grave returned. For a while the elder brother said nothing, for he had a consciousness in his heart that he ought to have consulted his father's son in designing this last becoming mark of affection and respect to his memory ; so the stone was planted in silence, and now stood erect, decently and simply among the other unostentatious memorials of the humble dead.

The inscription merely gave the name and age of the deceased, and told that the stone had been erected "by his affectionate sons." The sight of these words seemed to soften the displeasure of the angry man, and he said, somewhat more mildly, "Yes, we were his affectionate sons, and since my name is on the stone, I am satisfied, brother. We have not drawn together kindly of late years, and perhaps never may ; but I acknowledge and respect your worth ; and here, before our own friends, and before the friends of our father, with my foot above his head, I express my willingness to be on better and other terms with you, and if we cannot command love in our hearts, let us, at least, brother, bar out all unkindness."

The minister, who had attended the funeral, and had something intrusted to him to say publicly before he left the churchyard, now came forward, and asked the elder brother why he spake not regarding this matter. He saw that there was something of a cold and sullen pride rising up in his heart—for not easily may any man hope to dismiss from the chamber of his heart even the vilest guest, if once cherished there.

With a solemn and almost severe air, he looked upon the relenting man, and then, changing his countenance into serenity, said gently,—

Behold how good a thing it is,
And how becoming well,
Together such as brethren are
In unity to dwell.

The time, the place, and this beautiful expression of a natural sentiment, quite overcame a heart in which many kind, if not warm, affections dwelt ; and the man thus appealed to bowed down his head and wept.

"Give me your hand, brother ;" and it was given, while a murmur of satisfaction arose from all present, and all hearts felt kindlier and more humanely towards each other.

As the brothers stood fervently, but composedly, grasping each other's hands, in the little hollow that lay between the grave of their mother, long since dead, and that of their father, whose shroud was haply not yet still from the fall of dust to dust, the minister stood beside them with a pleasant countenance, and said, "I must fulfil the promise I made to your fatlier on his deathbed. I must read to you a few words which his hand wrote at an hour when his tongue denied its office. I must not say that you did your duty to your old father ; for did he not often beseech you, apart from one another, to be reconciled, for your own sakes as Christians, for his sake, and for the sake of the mother who bare you, and, Stephen, who died that you might be born ? When the palsy struck him for the last time, you were both absent, nor was it your fault that you were not beside the old man when he died. As long as sense continued with him here, did he think of you two, and of you two alone. Tears were in his eyes ; I saw them there, and on his cheek too, when no breath came from his lips. But of this no more. He died with this paper in his hand ; and he made me know

that I was to read it to you over his grave. I now obey him :

“ My sons, if you will let my bones lie quiet in the grave, near the dust of your mother, depart not from my burial till, in the name of God and Christ, you promise to love one another as you used to do. Dear boys, receive my blessing.”

Some turned their heads away to hide the tears that needed not to be hidden ; and when the brothers had released each other from a long and sobbing embrace, many went up to them, and in a single word or two expressed their joy at this perfect reconciliation. The brothers themselves walked away from the churchyard, arm in arm with the

minister, to the manse. On the following Sabbath they were seen sitting with their families in the same pew ; and it was observed that they read together off the same Bible when the minister gave out the text, and that they sang together, taking hold of the same psalm-book. The same psalm was sung (given out at their own request), of which one verse had been repeated at their father’s grave ; and a larger sum than usual was on that Sabbath found in the plate for the poor, for Love and Charity are sisters. And ever after, both during the peace and the troubles of this life, the hearts of the brothers were as one, and in nothing were they divided.

THE WIDOW'S PREDICTION :

A TALE OF THE SIEGE OF NAMUR.

ON the morning of the 30th August 1695, just as the sun began to tinge the dark and blood-stained battlements of Namur, a detachment of Mackay’s Scottish regiment made their rounds, relieving the last night-sentinels, and placing those of the morning. As soon as the party returned to their quarters, and relaxed from the formalities of military discipline, their leader, a tall, muscular man, of about middle age, with a keen eye and manly features, though swarthy and embrowned with toil, and wearing an expression but little akin to the gentle or the amiable, moved to an angle of the bastion, and, leaning on his spontoon, fixed an anxious gaze on the rising sun. While he remained in this position, he was approached by another officer, who, slapping him roughly on the shoulder, accosted him in these words—

“ What, Monteith ! are you in a

musing mood ? Pray, let me have the benefit of your morning meditations.”

“ Sir ! ” said Monteith, turning hastily round. “ Oh ! ‘tis you, Keppel. What think you of this morning ? ”

“ Why, that it will be a glorious day for some ; and for you and me, I hope, among others. Do you know that the Elector of Bavaria purposed a general assault to-day ? ”

“ I might guess as much, from the preparations going on. Well, would it were to-morrow ! ”

“ Sure you are not afraid, Monteith ? ”

“ Afraid ! It is not worth while to quarrel at present ; but methinks you, Keppel, might have spared that word. There are not many men who might utter it and live.”

“ Nay, I meant no offence ; yet permit me to say, that your words and manner

are strangely at variance with your usual bearing on a battle-morn."

"Perhaps so," replied Monteith ; "and, but that your English prejudices will refuse assent, it might be accounted for. That sun will rise to-morrow with equal power and splendour, gilding this earth's murky vapours, but I shall not behold his glory."

"Now, do tell me some soothful narrative of a second-sighted seer," said Keppel. "I promise to do my best to believe it. At any rate, I will not laugh outright, I assure you."

"I fear not that. It is no matter to excite mirth ; and, in truth, I feel at present strangely inclined to be communicative. Besides, I have a request to make ; and I may as well do something to induce you to grant it."

"That I readily will, if in my power," replied Keppel. "So, proceed with your story, if you please."

"Listen attentively, then—and be at once my first and my last confidant.

"Shortly after the battle of Bothwell Bridge, I joined the troop commanded by Irvine of Bonshaw ; and gloriously did we scour the country, hunting the rebel Covenanters, and acting our pleasure upon man, woman, and child, person and property. I was then but young, and, for a time, rather witnessed than acted in the wild and exciting commission which we so amply discharged. But use is all in all. Ere half-a-dozen years had sped their round, I was one of the prettiest men in the troop at everything. It was in the autumn of 1684, as I too well remember, that we were engaged in beating up the haunts of the Covenanters on the skirts of Galloway and Ayrshire. A deep mist, which covered the moors thick as a shroud—friendly at times to the Whigs, but, in the present instance, their foe—concealed our approach, till we were close upon a numerous conventicle. We hailed, and bade them stand ; but, trusting to their mosses

and glens, they scattered and fled. We pursued in various directions, pressing hard upon the fugitives. In spite of several morasses which I had to skirt, and difficult glens to thread, being well mounted, I gained rapidly on a young mountaineer, who, finding escape by flight impossible, bent his course to a house at a short distance, as hoping for shelter there, like a hare to her form. I shouted to him to stand ; he ran on. Again I hailed him ; but he heeded not ; when, dreading to lose all trace of him, should he gain the house, I fired. The bullet took effect. He fell, and his heart's blood gushed on his father's threshold. Just at that instant an aged woman, alarmed by the gallop of my horse, and the report of the pistol, rushed to the door, and stumbling, fell upon the body of her dying son. She raised his drooping head upon her knee, kissed his bloody brow, and screamed aloud, 'Oh, God of the widow and the fatherless, have mercy on me !' One ghastly convulsive shudder shook all her nerves, and the next moment they were calm as the steel of my sword ; then raising her pale and shrivelled countenance, every feature of which was fixed in the calm, unearthly earnestness of utter despair, or perfect resignation, she addressed me, every word falling distinct and piercing on my ear like dropping musketry.

"And hast thou this day made me a widowed, childless mother ? Hast thou shed the precious blood of this young servant of Jehovah ? And canst thou hope that thy lot will be one of unmixed happiness ? Go, red-handed persecutor ! Follow thine evil way ! But hear one message of truth from a feeble and unworthy tongue. Remorse, like a blood-hound, shall dog thy steps ; and the serpent of an evil conscience shall coil around thy heart. From this hour thou shalt never know peace. Thou shalt seek death, and long to meet it as a friend ; but it shall flee thee. And

when thou shalt begin to love life, and dread death, then shall thine enemy come upon thee ; and thou shalt not escape. Hence to thy bloody comrades, thou second Cain ! Thou accursed and banished from the face of Heaven and of mercy !—

“ ‘ Foul hag ! ’ I exclaimed, it would take little to make me send thee to join thy psalm-singing offspring ! ”

“ ‘ Well do I know that thou wouldest if thou wert permitted ! ’ replied she. ‘ But go thy way, and bethink thee how thou wilt answer to thy Creator for this morning’s work ! ’

“ And, ceasing to regard me, she stooped her head over the dead body of her son. I could endure no more, but wheeled around, and galloped off to join my companions.

“ From that hour, I felt myself a doomed and miserable man. In vain did I attempt to banish from my mind the deed I had done, and the words I had heard. In the midst of mirth and revelry, the dying groan of the youth, and the words of doom spoken by his mother, rung for ever in my ears, converting the festal board to a scene of carnage and horror, till the very wine-cup seemed to foam over with hot bubbling gore. Once I tried—laugh, if you will—I tried to pray ; but the clotted locks of the dying man, and the earnest gaze of the soul-stricken mother, came betwixt me and Heaven,—my lip faltered—my breath stopped—my very soul stood still, for I knew that my victims were in Paradise, and how could I think of happiness—I, their murderer—in one common home with them ? Despair took possession of my whole being. I rushed voluntarily to the centre of every deadly peril, in hopes to find an end to my misery. Yourself can bear me witness that I have ever been the first to meet, the last to retire from, danger. Often, when I heard the battle-signal given, and when I passed the trench, or stormed the breach, in

front of my troop, it was less to gain applause and promotion than to provoke the encounter of death. ’Twas all in vain. I was doomed not to die, while I longed for death. And now—”

“ Well, by your own account, you run no manner of risk, and at the same time are proceeding on a rapid career of military success,” said Keppel ; “ and, for my life, I cannot see why that should affect you, supposing it all perfectly true.”

“ Because you have not yet heard the whole. But listen a few minutes longer. During last winter, our division, as you know, was quartered in Brussels, and was very kindly entertained by the wealthy and good-natured Flemings. Utterly tired of the heartless dissipation of life in a camp, I endeavoured to make myself agreeable to my landlord, that I might obtain a more intimate admission into his family circle. To this I was the more incited, that I expected some pleasure in the society of his daughter. In all I succeeded to my wish. I became quite a favourite with the old man, and procured ready access to the company of his child. But I was sufficiently piqued to find, that in spite of all my gallantry, I could not learn whether I had made any impression upon the heart of the laughing Fanchon. What peace and playful toying could not accomplish, war and sorrow did. We were called out of winter quarters, to commence what was anticipated to be a bloody campaign. I obtained an interview to take a long and doubtful farewell. In my arms the weeping girl owned her love, and pledged her hand, should I survive to return once more to Brussels. Keppel, I am a doomed man ; and my doom is about to be accomplished ! Formerly I wished to die ; but death fled me. Now I wish to live ; and death will come upon me ! I know I shall never more see Brussels, nor my lovely little Fleming. Wilt

thou carry her my last farewell ; and tell her to forget a man who was unworthy of her love—whose destiny drove him to love, and be beloved, that he might experience the worst of human wretchedness ? You'll do this for me, Keppel ? ”

“ If I myself survive, I will. But this is some delusion—some strong dream. I trust it will not unnerve your arm in the moment of the storm.”

“ No ! I may die—*must* die ; but it shall be in front of my troop, or in the middle of the breach. Yet how I long to escape this doom ! I have won enough of glory ; I despise pillage and wealth ; but I feel my very heartstrings shrink from the now terrible idea of final dissolution. Oh ! that the fatal hour were past, or that I had still my former eagerness to die ! Keppel, if I dared, I would to-day own myself a coward.”

“ Come with me,” said Keppel, “ to my quarters. The night air has made you aguish. The cold fit will yield to a cup of as generous Rhine wine as ever was drunk on the banks of the Sambre.” Monteith consented, and the two moved off to partake of the stimulating and substantial comforts of a soldier’s breakfast in the Netherlands.

It was between one and two in the afternoon. An unusual stillness reigned in the lines of the besiegers. The garrison remained equally silent, as watching in deep suspense on what point the storm portended by this terrible calm would burst. A single piece of artillery was discharged. Instantly a body of grenadiers rushed from the intrenchments, struggled over masses of ruins, and mounted the breach. The shock was dreadful. Man strove with man, and blow succeeded to blow, with fierce and breathless energy. The English reached the summit, but were

almost immediately beaten back, leaving numbers of their bravest grovelling among the blackened fragments. Their leader, Lord Cutts, had himself received a dangerous wound in the head ; but disregarding it, he selected two hundred men from Mackay’s regiment, and putting them under the command of Lieutenants Cockle and Monteith, sent them to restore the fortunes of the assault. Their charge was irresistible. Led on by Monteith, who displayed a wild and frantic desperation, rather than bravery, they broke through all impediments, drove the French from the covered way, seized on one of the batteries, and turned the cannon against the enemy. To enable them to maintain this advantage, they were reinforced by parties from other divisions. Keppel, advancing in one of those parties, discovered the mangled form of his friend Monteith, lying on heaps of the enemy on the very summit of the captured battery. He attempted to raise the seemingly lifeless body. Monteith opened his eyes,—“ Save me ! ” he cried ; “ save me ! I will not die ! I dare not—I must not die ! ”

It were to horrid to specify the ghastly nature of the mortal wounds which had torn and disfigured his frame. To live was impossible. Yet Keppel strove to render him some assistance, were it but to soothe his parting spirit. Again he opened his glazing eyes,—“ I will resist thee to the last ! ” he cried, in a raving delirium. “ I killed him but in the discharge of my duty. What worse was I than others ? Poor consolation now ! The doom—the doom ! I cannot—dare not—must not—*will not die !* ” And while the vain words were gurgling in his throat, his head sunk back on the body of a slaughtered foe, and his unwilling spirit forsook his shattered body.—*Edinburgh Literary Journal.*

THE LADY OF WARISTOUN.

THE estate of Waristoun, near Edinburgh, now partly covered by the extended streets of the metropolis on its northern side, is remarkable in local history for having belonged to a gentleman, who in the year 1600, was cruelly murdered at the instigation of his wife. This unfortunate lady, whose name was Jean Livingstone, was descended from a respectable ancestry, being the daughter of Livingstone, the laird of Dunipace, in Stirlingshire, and at an early age was married to John Kincaid, the laird of Waristoun, who, it is believed, was considerably more advanced in years than herself. It is probable that this disparity of age laid the foundation of much domestic strife, and led to the tragical event now to be noticed. The ill-fated marriage and its results form the subject of an old Scottish ballad, in which the proximate cause of the murder is said to have been a quarrel at the dinner-table :

It was at dinner as they sat,
And when they drank the wine,
How happy were the laird and lady
Of bonny Waristoun !

But he has spoken a word in jest ;
Her answer was not good ;
And he has thrown a plate at her,
Made her mouth gush with blude.

Whether owing to such a circumstance as is here alluded to, or a bite which the laird is said to have inflicted upon her arm, is immaterial ; the lady, who appeared to have been unable to restrain her malignant passions, conceived the diabolical design of having her husband assassinated. There was something extraordinary in the deliberation with which this wretched woman approached the awful gulf of crime. Having resolved on the means to be employed in the murder, she sent for a quon-

dam servant of her father, Robert Weir, who lived in the neighbouring city. He came to the place of Waristoun, to see her ; but it appears her resolution failed, and he was not admitted. She again sent for him, and he again went. Again he was not admitted. At length, on his being called a third time, he was introduced to her presence. Before this time she had found an accomplice in the nurse of her child. It was then arranged that Weir should be concealed in a cellar till the dead of night, when he should come forth, and proceed to destroy the laird as he lay in his chamber. The bloody tragedy was acted precisely in accordance with this plan. Weir was brought up at midnight from the cellar to the hall by the lady herself, and afterwards went forward alone to the laird's bedroom. As he proceeded to his bloody work, she retired to her bed, to wait the intelligence of her husband's murder. When Weir entered the chamber, Waristoun awoke with the noise, and leant inquiringly over the bed. The murderer then leapt upon him. The unhappy man uttered a great cry. Weir gave him some severe blows on vital parts, particularly one on the flank vein. But as the laird was still able to cry out, he at length saw fit to take more effective measures. He seized him by the throat with both hands, and, compressing that part with all his force, succeeded, after a few minutes, in depriving him of life.

When the lady heard her husband's first death-shout, she leapt out of bed, in an agony of mingled horror and repentance, and descended to the hall ; but she made no effort to countermand her mission of destruction. She waited patiently till Weir came down to inform her that all was over. Weir made an

immediate escape from justice, but Lady Waristoun and the nurse were apprehended before the deed was half-a-day old. Being caught, as the Scottish law terms it, "red-hand,"—that is, while still bearing unequivocal marks of guilt,—they were immediately tried by the magistrates of Edinburgh, and sentenced to be strangled and burnt at the stake.

The lady's father, the Laird of Duni-
pace, who was a favourite of King
James VI., made all the interest he
could with his Majesty to procure a
pardon; but all that could be obtained
from the king was an order that the
unhappy lady should be executed by
decapitation, and that at such an early
hour in the morning as to make the
affair as little of a spectacle as possible.
The space intervening between her
sentence and her execution was only
thirty-seven hours, yet in that little
time Lady Waristoun contrived to be-
come converted from a blood-stained
and unrelenting murderer into a perfect
saint on earth. One of the then min-
isters of Edinburgh has left an account
of her conversion, which was lately
published, and would be extremely
amusing, were it not for the loathing

which seizes the mind on beholding
such an instance of perverted religion.
She went to the scaffold with a de-
meanour which would have graced a
martyr. Her lips were incessant in the
utterance of pious exclamations. She
professed herself confident of everlast-
ing happiness. She even grudged every
moment which she spent in this world
as so much taken from that sum of
eternal felicity which she was to enjoy
in the next. The people who came to
witness the last scene, instead of having
their minds inspired with a salutary
horror for her crime, were engrossed in
admiration of her saintly behaviour, and
greedily gathered up every devout word
which fell from her tongue. It would
almost appear, from the narrative of
the clergyman, that her fate was rather
a matter of envy than of any other
feeling. Her execution took place at four
in the morning of the 5th of July, at the
Watergate, near Holyrood-house; and
at the same hour her nurse was burned
on the Castle-hill. It is some grati-
fication to know that the actual mur-
derer, Weir, was eventually seized and
executed, though not till four years
Chambers's Edinburgh Journal, 1832.

A TALE OF PENTLAND.

BY JAMES HOGG, THE "ETTRICK SHEPHERD."

MR JOHN HALIDAY having been in hiding on the hills, after the battle of Pentland, became impatient to hear news concerning the sufferings of his brethren who had been in arms; and in particular, if there were any troops scouring the district in which he had found shelter. Accordingly, he left his hiding-place in the evening, and travelled towards the valley until about midnight, when, coming to the house of Gabriel Johnstone, and perceiving a light, he determined on entering, as he knew him to be a devout man, and one much concerned about the sufferings of the Church of Scotland.

Mr Haliday, however, approached the house with great caution, for he rather wondered why there should be a light there at midnight, while at the same time he neither heard psalms singing nor the accents of prayer. So, casting off his heavy shoes, for fear of making a noise, he stole softly up to the little window from whence the light beamed, and peeped in, where he saw, not Johnstone, but another man, whom he did not know, in the very act of cutting a soldier's throat, while Johnstone's daughter, a comely girl, about twenty years of age, was standing deliberately by, and holding the candle to him.

Haliday was seized with an inexpressible terror; for the floor was all blood, and the man was struggling in the agonies of death, and from his dress he appeared to have been a cavalier of some distinction. So completely was the Covenanter overcome with horror, that he turned and fled from the house with all his might. So much had Haliday been confounded that he even forgot to lift his shoes, but fled without them; and he had not

run above half a bowshot before he came upon two men hastening to the house of Gabriel Johnstone. As soon as they perceived him running towards them they fled, and he pursued them; for when he saw them so ready to take alarm, he was sure they were some of the persecuted race, and tried eagerly to overtake them, exerting his utmost speed, and calling on them to stop. All this only made them run faster; and when they came to a feal-dyke they separated, and ran different ways, and he soon thereafter lost sight of them both.

This house, where Johnstone lived, is said to have been in a lonely concealed dell, not far from West Linton, in what direction I do not know, but it was towards that village that Haliday fled, not knowing whether he went, till he came to the houses. Having no acquaintances here whom he durst venture to call up, and the morning having set in frosty, he began to conceive that it was absolutely necessary for him to return to the house of Gabriel Johnstone, and try to regain his shoes, as he little knew when or where it might be in his power to get another pair. Accordingly, he hasted back by a nearer path, and coming to the place before it was day, found his shoes. At the same time he heard a fierce contention within the house, but as there seemed to be a watch he durst not approach it, but again made his escape.

Having brought some victuals along with him, he did not return to his hiding-place that day, which was in a wild height, south of Biggar, but remained in the moss of Craigengaur; and as soon as it drew dark, descended again into the valley. Again he per-

ceived a light in the distance, where he thought no light should have been. But he went towards it, and as he approached he heard the melody of psalm-singing issuing from the place, and floating far on the still breeze of the night. He hurried to the spot, and found the reverend and devout Mr Livingston, in the act of divine worship, in an old void barn on the lands of Slipperfield, with a great number of serious and pious people, who were all much affected both by his prayers and discourse.

After the worship was ended, Haliday made up to the minister, among many others, to congratulate him on the splendour of his discourse, and implore "a further supply of the same milk of redeeming grace, with which they found their souls nourished, cherished, and exalted." The good man complied with the request, and appointed another meeting at the same place on a future night.

Haliday having been formerly well acquainted with the preacher, convoyed him on his way home, where they condoled with one another on the hardness of their lots; and Haliday told him of the scene he had witnessed at the house of Gabriel Johnstone. The heart of the good minister was wrung with grief, and he deplored the madness and malace of the people who had committed an act that would bring down tenfold vengeance on the heads of the whole persecuted race. At length it was resolved between them that, as soon as it was day, they would go and reconnoitre, and if they found the case of the aggravated nature they suspected, they would themselves be the first to expose it, and give the perpetrators up to justice.

Accordingly, next morning they took another man into the secret, a William Rankin, one of Mr Livingston's elders, and the three went away to Johnstone's house, to investigate the case of the ca-

valier's murder; but there was a guard of three armed men opposed them, and neither promises nor threatenings, nor all the minister's eloquence, could induce them to give way one inch. The men advised the intruders to take themselves off, lest a worse thing should befall them; and as they continued to motion them away, with the most impatient gestures, the kind divine and his associates thought meet to retire, and leave the matter as it was; and thus was this mysterious affair hushed up in silence and darkness for that time, no tongue having been heard to mention it further than as above recited. The three armed men were all unknown to the others, but Haliday observed that one of them was the very youth whom he saw cutting off the soldier's head with a knife.

The rage and cruelty of the Popish party seemed to gather new virulence every day, influencing all the counsels of the king; and the persecution of the Nonconformists was proportionably severe. One new act of council was issued after another, all tending to root the Covenanters out of Scotland, but it had only the effect of making their tenets still dearer to them. The longed-for night of the meeting in the old hay-barn at length arrived, and it was attended by a still greater number than on the night preceding. A more motley group can hardly be conceived than appeared in the barn that night, and the lamps being weak and dim rendered the appearance of the assembly still more striking. It was, however, observed that about the middle of the service a number of fellows came in with broad slouch bonnets, and watch-coats or cloaks about them, who placed themselves in equal divisions at the two doors, and remained without uncovering their heads, two of them being busily engaged taking notes. Before Mr Livingston began the last prayer, however, he desired the men to uncover, which

they did, and the service went on to the end ; but no sooner had the minister pronounced the word *Amen*, than the group of late comers threw off their cloaks, and drawing out swords and pistols, their commander, one General Drummond, charged the whole congregation in the king's name to surrender.

A scene of the utmost confusion ensued. The lights being extinguished, many of the young men burst through the roof of the old barn in every direction, and though many shots were fired at them in the dark, great numbers escaped ; but Mr Livingston and other eleven were retained prisoners, and conveyed to Edinburgh, where they were examined before the council and cast into prison. Among the prisoners were Mr Haliday and the identical young man whom he had seen in the act of murdering the cavalier, and who turned out to be a Mr John Lindsay, from Edinburgh, who had been at the battle of Pentland, and in hiding afterwards.

Great was the lamentation for the loss of Mr Livingston, who was so highly esteemed by his hearers. The short extracts from his sermons in the barn, that were produced against him on his trial, prove him to have been a man endowed with talents somewhat above the greater part of his contemporaries. His text that night it appears had been taken from Genesis :— “ And God saw the wickedness of man that it was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” One of the quoted passages concludes thus :—

“ Let us join together in breaking the bands of the oppressors, and casting their cords from us. As for myself, as a member of this poor persecuted Church of Scotland, and an unworthy minister of it, I hereby call upon you all, in the name of God, to set your faces, your hearts, and your hands against all such acts, which are or shall

be passed against the covenanted work of reformation in this kingdom ; that we here declare ourselves free of the guilt of them, and pray that God may put this in record in heaven.”

These words having been sworn to, and Mr Livingston not denying them, a sharp debate arose in the council what punishment to award. The king's advocate urged the utility of sending him forthwith to the gallows ; but some friends in the council got his sentence commuted to banishment ; and he was accordingly banished the kingdom. Six more, against whom nothing could be proven farther than their having been present at a conventicle, were sentenced to imprisonment for two months ; among this number, Haliday was one. The other five were condemned to be executed at the cross of Edinburgh, on the 14th of December following ; and among this last unhappy number was Mr John Lindsay.

Haliday now tried all the means he could devise to gain an interview with Lindsay, to have some explanation of the extraordinary scene he had witnessed in the cottage at midnight, for it had made a fearful impression upon his mind, and he never could get rid of it for a moment ; having still in his mind's eye a beautiful country maiden standing with a pleased face, holding a candle, and Lindsay in the meantime at his horrid task. His endeavours, however, were all in vain, for they were in different prisons, and the jailer paid no attention to his requests. But there was a gentleman in the privy council that year, whose name, I think, was Gilmour, to whose candour Haliday conceived that both he and some of his associates owed their lives. To this gentleman, therefore, he applied by letter, requesting a private interview with him, as he had a singular instance of barbarity to communicate, which it would be well to inquire into while the possibility of doing so remained, for

the access to it would soon be sealed for ever. The gentleman attended immediately, and Haliday revealed to him the circumstances previously mentioned, stating that the murderer now lay in the Tolbooth jail, under sentence of death.

Gilmour appeared much interested, as well as astonished at the narrative, and taking out a note-book, he looked over some dates, and then observed—“This date of yours tallies exactly with one of my own, relating to an incident of the same sort; but the circumstances narrated are so different, that I must conceive either that you are mistaken, or that you are trumping up this story to screen some other guilty person or persons.”

Haliday disclaimed all such motives, and persevered in his attestations. Gilmour then took him along with him to the Tolbooth prison, where the two were admitted to a private interview with the prisoner, and there charged him with the crime of murder in such a place and on such a night; but he denied the whole with disdain. Haliday told him that it was in vain for him to deny it, for he beheld him in the very act of perpetrating the murder with his own eyes, while Gabriel Johnstone’s daughter stood deliberately and held the candle to him.

“Hold your tongue, fellow!” said Lindsay, disdainfully, “for you know not what you are saying. What a cowardly dog you must be by your own account! If you saw me murdering a gentleman cavalier, why did you not rush in to his assistance?”

“I could not have saved the gentleman then,” said Haliday, “and I thought it not meet to intermeddle in such a scene of blood.”

“It was as well for you that you did not,” said Lindsay.

“Then you acknowledge being in the cottage of the dell that night?” said Gilmour.

“And if I was, what is that to you? Or what is it now to me or any person? I *was* there on the night specified; but I am ashamed of the part I there acted, and am now well requited for it. Yes, requited as I ought to be, so let it rest; for not one syllable of the transaction shall any one hear from me.”

Thus they were obliged to leave the prisoner, and forthwith Gilmour led Haliday up a stair to a lodging in the Parliament Square, where they found a gentleman lying sick in bed, to whom Mr Gilmour said, after inquiring after his health, “Brother Robert, I conceive that we two have found out the young man who saved your life at the cottage among the mountains.”

“I would give the half that I possess that this were true,” said the sick gentleman. “Who or where is he?”

“If I am right in my conjecture,” said the privy councillor, “he is lying in the Tolbooth jail, under sentence of death, and has but a few days to live. But tell me, brother, could you know him, or have you any recollection of his appearance?”

“Alas! I have none,” said the other, mournfully, “for I was insensible, through the loss of blood, the whole time I was under his protection; and if I ever heard his name I have lost it, the whole of that period being a total blank in my memory. But he must be a hero in the first rank; and therefore, oh, my dear brother, save him whatever his crime may be.”

“His life is justly forfeited to the laws of his country, brother,” said Gilmour, “and he must die with the rest.”

“He shall not die with the rest if I should die for him,” cried the sick man, vehemently. “I will move heaven and earth before my brave deliverer shall die like a felon.”

“Calm yourself, brother, and trust that part to me,” said Gilmour. “I think my influence saved the life of

this gentleman, as well as the lives of some others, and it was all on account of the feeling of respect I had for the party, one of whom, or, rather, two of whom, acted such a noble and distinguished part toward you. But pray, undeceive this gentleman by narrating the facts to him, in which he cannot fail to be interested.” The sick man, whose name, if I remember aright, was Captain Robert Gilmour, of the volunteers, then proceeded as follows:—

“ There having been high rewards offered for the apprehension of some south-country gentlemen, whose correspondence with Mr Welch, and some other of the fanatics, had been intercepted, I took advantage of information I obtained regarding the place of their retreat, and set out, certain of apprehending two of them at least.

“ Accordingly, I went off one morning about the beginning of November, with only five followers, well armed and mounted. We left Gilmerton long before it was light, and having a trusty guide, rode straight to their hiding-place, where we did not arrive till towards the evening, when we started them. They were seven in number, and were armed with swords and bludgeons; but, being apprized of our approach, they fled from us, and took shelter in a morass, into which it was impossible to follow them on horseback. But perceiving three more men on another hill, I thought there was no time to lose, so giving one of my men our horses to hold, the rest of us advanced into the morass with drawn swords and loaded horse-pistols. I called to them to surrender, but they stood upon their guard, determined on resistance; and just when we were involved to the knees in the mire of the morass, they broke in upon us, pell-mell, and for about two minutes the engagement was very sharp. There was an old man struck me a terrible blow with a bludgeon, and was just about to repeat

it, when I brought him down with a shot from my pistol. A young fellow then ran at me with his sword, and as I still stuck in the moss, I could not ward the blow, so that he got a fair stroke at my neck, meaning, without doubt, to cut off my head; and he would have done it had his sword been sharp. As it was, he cut it to the bone, and opened one of the jugular veins. I fell, but my men firing a volley in their faces, at that moment they fled. It seems we did the same, without loss of time; for I must now take my narrative from the report of others, as I remember no more that passed. My men bore me on their arms to our horses, and then mounted and fled, trying all that they could to stanch the bleeding of my wound. But perceiving a party coming down a hill, as with the intent of cutting off their retreat, and losing all hopes of saving my life, they carried me into a cottage in a wild lonely retreat, commended me to the care of the inmates, and after telling them my name, and in what manner I had received my death wound, they thought proper to provide for their own safety, and so escaped.

“ The only inmates of that lonely house, at least at that present time, were a lover and his mistress, but intercommuned Whigs; and when my men left me on the floor, the blood, which they had hitherto restrained in part, burst out afresh and deluged the floor. The young man said it was best to put me out of my pain, but the girl wept and prayed him rather to render me some assistance. ‘ Oh, Johnny, man, how can you speak that gate?’ cried she. ‘ Suppose he be our mortal enemy, he is aye ane o’ God’s creatures, an’ has a soul to be saved as well as either you or me; and a soldier is obliged to do as he is bidden. Now Johnny, ye ken ye were learned to be a doctor o’ physic; wad ye no rather try to stop the bleeding, and save the young

officer's life, as either kill him, or let him bleed to death on our floor, when the blame o' the murder might fa' on us !'

"Now, the blessing of heaven light on your head, my dear Sally!" said the lover, "for you have spoken the very sentiments of my heart; and, since it is your desire, though we should both rue it, I here vow to you that I will not only endeavour to save his life, but I will defend it against our own party to the last drop of my blood."

"He then began, and, in spite of my feeble struggles, who knew not either what I was doing or suffering, sewed up the hideous gash in my throat and neck, tying every stitch by itself; and the house not being able to produce a pair of scissors, it seems that he cut off all the odds and ends of the stitching with a large sharp gully knife, and it was likely to have been during the operation that this gentleman chanced to look in at the window. He then bathed the wound for an hour with cloths dipped in cold water, dressed it with plaster of wood-betony, and put me to bed, expressing to his sweetheart the most vivid hopes of my recovery.

"These operations were scarcely finished when the maid's two brothers came home from their hiding-place; and it seems they would have been there much sooner had not this gentleman given them chase in the contrary direction. They, seeing the floor all covered with blood, inquired the cause with wild trepidation of manner. Their sister was the first to inform them of what had happened, on which both the young men gripped to their weapons, and the eldest, Samuel, cried out with the vehemence of a maniac, 'Blessed be the righteous avenger of blood! Hoo! Is it then true that the Lord hath delivered our greatest enemy into our hands?' 'Hold, hold, dearest brother!' cried the maid, spreading

out her arms before him. 'Would you kill a helpless young man, lying in a state of insensibility! What! although the Almighty hath put his life in your hand, will He not require the blood of you, slied in such a base and cowardly way?'

"Hold your peace, foolish girl," cried he, in the same furious strain. "I tell you, if he had a thousand lives I would sacrifice them all this moment! Wo be to this old rusty and fizenless sword that did not sever his head from his body when I had a fair chance in the open field! Nevertheless he shall die; for you do not yet know that he hath, within these few hours, murdered our father, whose blood is yet warm around him on the bleak height."

"Oh! merciful heaven! killed our father!" screamed the girl, and flinging herself down on the resting-chair, she fainted away. The two brothers regarded not, but with their bared weapons made towards the closet, intent on my blood, and both vowing I should die if I had a thousand lives. The stranger interfered, and thrust himself into the closet door before them, swearing that, before they committed so cowardly a murder they should first make their way through his body.

"Samuel retreated one step to have full sway for his weapon, and the fury depicted on his countenance proved his determination. But in a moment his gallant opponent closed with him, and holding up his wrist with his left hand, he with the right bestowed on him a blow with such energy that he fell flat on the floor among the soldier's blood. The youngest then ran on their antagonist with his sword and wounded him, but the next moment he was lying beside his brother. As soon as her brothers came fairly to their senses, the young woman and her lover began and expostulated with them, at great length, on the impropriety and unmanliness of the attempt, until they

became all of one mind, and the two brothers agreed to join in the defence of the wounded gentleman, from all of their own party, until he was rescued by his friends, which they did. But it was the maid's simple eloquence that finally prevailed with the fierce Covenanters.

"When my brothers came at last, with a number of my men, and took me away, the only thing I remember seeing in the house was the corpse of the old man whom I had shot, and the beautiful girl standing weeping over the body; and certainly my heart smote me in such a manner that I would not experience the same feeling again for the highest of this world's benefits. That comely young maiden, and her brave intrepid lover, it would be the utmost ingratitude in me, or in any of my family, ever to forget; for it is scarcely possible that a man can ever be again in the same circumstances as I was, having been preserved from death in the house of the man whom my hand had just deprived of life."

Just as he ended, the sick nurse peeped in, which she had done several times before, and said, "Will your honour soon be disengaged, d'ye think? for ye see because there's a lass wanting till speak till ye."

"A lass, nurse? what lass can have any business with me? what is she like?"

"Oo, 'deed, sir, the lass is weel enough for that part o't, but she may be nae better than she should be for a' that; ye ken, I'se no answer for that, for ye see because "like is an ill mark"; but she has been often up, speiring after ye, an' gude troth she's fairly in nettle-earnest now, for she winna gang awa till she see your honour."

The nurse being desired to show her in, a comely girl entered, with a timid step, and seemed ready to faint with trepidation. She had a mantle on, and a hood that covered much of her face.

The privy councillor spoke to her, desiring her to come forward and say her errand, on which she said that "she only wanted a preevat word wi' the captain, if he was that weel as to speak to ane," He looked over the bed, and desired her to say on, for that gentleman was his brother, from whom he kept no secrets. After a hard struggle with her diffidence, but, on the other hand, prompted by the urgency of the case, she at last got out, "I'm unco glad to see you sae weel comed round again, though I daresay ye'll maybe no ken wha I am. But it was me that nursed ye, an' took care o' ye in our house, when your head was amraig cuttit off."

There was not another word required to draw forth the most ardent expressions of kindness from the two brothers, on which the poor girl took courage, and, after several showers of tears, she said, with many bitter sobs, "There's a poor lad wha, in my humble opinion, saved your life; an' wha is just gaun to be hanged the day after the morn. I wad unco fain beg your honour's interest to get his life spared."

"Say not another word, my dear good girl," said the councillor; "for though I hardly know how I can intercede for a rebel who has taken up arms against the government, yet, for your sake and his, my best interest shall be exerted."

"Oh, ye maun just say, sir, that the poor Whigs were driven to desperation, and that this young man was misled by others in the fervour and enthusiasm of youth. What else can ye say? But ye're good—oh, ye're very good! and on my knees I beg that ye winna lose ony time, for indeed there is nae time to lose!"

The councillor lifted her kindly by both hands, and desired her to stay with his brother's nurse till his return, on which he went away to the presi-

dent, and in half-an-hour returned with a respite for the convict, John Lindsay, for three days, which he gave to the girl, along with an order for her admittance to the prisoner. She thanked him with the tears in her eyes, but added, "Oh, sir, will he and I then be obliged to part for ever at the end of three days?"

"Keep up your heart, and encourage your lover," said he, "and meet me here again, on Thursday, at this same hour, for, till the council meet, nothing further than this can be obtained."

It may well be conceived how much the poor forlorn prisoner was astonished when his own beloved Sally entered to him with a reprieve in her hand, and how much his whole soul dilated when, on the Thursday following, she presented him with a free pardon. They were afterwards married, when the Gilmours took them under their protection. Lindsay became a highly qualified surgeon, and the descendants of this intrepid youth occupy respectable situations in Edinburgh to the present day.

GRAYSTEEL:

A TRADITIONAL STORY OF CAITHNESS.

IN a beautiful valley in the highlands of Caithness, lies embosomed a small mountain tarn, called the Loch of Ranag. The hill of Bencheildt, which ascends abruptly from the water's edge, protects it on the north. On the south it is overlooked by a chain of lofty mountains, individually named Scarabine, Morven, and the Pap, which form a natural barrier betwixt Sutherland and Caithness. Morven, the highest in the range, is nearly two thousand feet above the level of the sea, and turns up conspicuously over the neighbouring summits, like a huge pyramid. The extensive wild lying between this magnificent chain of hills and Ranag, is clothed in the autumnal season with rich purple heather; and here the plover and the grouse, the denizens of the solitary waste, live unmolested, except by the murderous gun of the sportsman. Near the north edge of the loch to which we have just alluded, there is a small island, on which may be still seen the ruins of an old keep or castle. The last proprietor of this fortalice is said

to have been a noted freebooter of the name of Graysteel, who kept the whole county in alarm by his predatory incursions from the Ord to Duncansbay Head, and, like Rob Roy and others of the same stamp, rigorously exacted "black mail," or protection money. Tradition also reports, that, besides being possessed of great bodily strength, he was an expert swordsman, and a person of such a jealous and tyrannical disposition, that none durst venture to hunt or shoot on his grounds, without being challenged to single combat; and it may be added, that none whom he encountered trespassing in this way ever escaped alive out of his hands. It happened that one of the family of Rollo, while pursuing his sport in the direction, one day unfortunately encroached on the sacred property of the robber. Being informed by some of his retainers that a stranger was hunting on the west side of the lake, Graysteel immediately sallied forth, and, running up towards the sportsman with menacing looks and gestures, gave him the accustomed chal-

lenge. Rollo saw he had no alternative but to give him combat, and being a high-spirited young man, he instantly drew his sword ; and, although he defended himself for some time with great skill and courage, it is needless to say that he sank at last, mortally wounded, under the more powerful arm of his antagonist. The ruffian afterwards stripped the dead body of every thing that was of any value, and then threw it into the loch.

The account of this melancholy occurrence, as soon as it reached the family and relatives of the unfortunate youth, plunged them into the deepest distress ; but none did it inspire with more poignant regret than the young laird of Durie, who was his bosom friend, and had just been affianced to his sister, a very beautiful and interesting girl of sixteen. The moment he heard of Rollo's tragical death, he determined to avenge it, although he knew he had little chance of surviving a personal encounter with such a desperado as Graysteel. Accordingly, having furnished himself with a good Highland broadsword, and without communicating his intention to any one, he set off for the residence of the freebooter. Nor was the route he had to take, any more than the occasion of the journey, agreeable. A trackless moor, of some miles in extent, lay between him and Ranag, so very bleak and barren, that, in the words of the poet,

The solitary bee
Flew there on restless wing,
Seeking in vain one blossom where to fix.

He had not gone far, however, when he was overtaken by a severe storm, which rendered it impossible for him to continue his journey. The wind, which blew at times with irresistible fury, dashed the rain in his face, mingled with hail, and howled like a maniac on the naked moor. Clouds of turbid vapour, issuing, as it were, from a vast furnace, hurried across the sky ; and

now and then the rolling of thunder, while it prognosticated a continuance of the storm, added not a little to its terrors. Driven by the wind, and battered by the rain, our traveller began anxiously to look around him for some place of shelter. At length, to his great joy, he espied, a few hundred yards distant, a small solitary cottage, situated on the edge of the moor. Thither he immediately directed his steps, and, on entering, found its sole occupant to be a poor aged widow, who lived upon the gratuitous bounty of the public. There was something, however, in her appearance, though bent down with years and infirmities, that spoke of better days. On a small stool beside her lay the Bible, which she seemed to have been just reading. She welcomed in the stranger with a look of much cheerfulness, and kindly offered him such accommodation for the night as her scanty means could afford. As the storm continued to rage with unabated violence, Durie gladly accepted the proffered hospitality ; and, in the meantime, the venerable hostess did all in her power to make him comfortable, by putting an additional peat or two on the hearth, and furnishing him with something to eat. On examining the scanty furniture of the apartment, which was now more distinctly seen by the light of a blazing turf-fire, he observed, in one corner, a very uncommon-looking sword, with the appearance of which he was not a little struck. The hilt and blade were covered over with a variety of strange characters and fantastic devices, plainly indicating that it was of foreign manufacture, and belonged to a remote period. His curiosity was powerfully excited ; and on asking the old woman how she came by such a magnificent weapon, she gave him the following particulars regarding it. The sword, which had originally belonged to a noble Saracen, was that of her deceased husband, who had been a volunteer in

the regiment of Highlanders that had gone over to Holland under the command of Lord Reay. He had received it as a present from a Polish Jew, whose life he had saved in a moment of extreme danger. She, moreover, informed him that her husband, while on his deathbed, had strictly enjoined her not to sell or dispose of it in any way, but to preserve it as an heirloom of the family. On getting this account of the sword, Durie told the woman who he was, and the errand on which he was going, and begged of her to give him the use of it for a single day. After much entreaty, she at last agreed to give it, on the condition that it should be strictly returned.

The storm, which was short-lived in proportion to its violence, gradually died away towards morning ; and at the first peep of dawn our hero, who burned with impatience to measure weapons with the murderer of his friend, was up, and, with his enchanted sword firmly girt on his side, pursuing his solitary route across the moors. His spirits were now buoyant with hope ; and he beheld with a feeling of sympathy the universal gladness which, after the late convulsion of its elements, was diffused over the face of nature. Already the “bird of the wilderness” sang blithely overhead, whilst the beams of a brilliant morning sun were beginning to dissipate the mists which lay thick and heavy upon the hills. Our traveller was not long in reaching the brow of Benchieldt ; and scarcely had he descended half way down the side fronting the castle, when he was met by Gray-

steel, who, as usual, challenged him for intruding on his grounds, and desired him to draw and defend himself. “Villain !” cried Durie, unsheathing his weapon, which flashed in his hand like the Scandinavian monarch’s celebrated elfin sword—“villain ! you wantonly slew my friend, and you shall this day atone for it with your heart’s blood !”

The robber chief laughed scornfully at what he considered an empty bravado, and immediately made a thrust at his opponent, which the latter parried off with admirable dexterity. A desperate struggle now ensued. Graysteel fought with the fury of an enraged mastiff ; but young Durie pressed upon him so hard with his never-failing blade, that he was obliged to give way, and at last received a mortal wound. After this, the hero of our tale went immediately home, and, having raised a body of stout followers, proceeded back to Ranag, took the castle, and nearly levelled it with the ground.

The *denouement* of our little story may be anticipated. After a decent period for mourning had elapsed, Durie led his beautiful bride to the hymeneal altar. Nor, in the midst of his happiness, did he forget his good friend, the old woman of the moor. The sword, which had proved so invaluable an auxiliary to him in the hour of need, he not only returned to her, but he took her under his protection, and kept her comfortable for the rest of her days—
Joy seized her withered veins, and one bright
gleam
Of setting life shone on her evening hours.

—*John O’Groat Journal*, 1836.

THE BILLETED SOLDIER.

IN the autumn of 1803, the Forfar and Kincardine militia,—then an infantry regiment of about 1000 strong,—*en route* from the south of Scotland to Aberdeen, along the coast road, happened to perform the march between the towns of Montrose and Bervie on a Saturday. The want of the required accommodation in Bervie for so many men rendered it necessary that a considerable portion should be billeted in the adjoining villages of Johnshaven and Gourdon, and on farmers and others on the line of march. In carrying out this arrangement, it so happened that one private soldier was billeted on a farmer or crofter of the name of Lyall, on the estate of East Mathers, situated about a mile north-west of the village of Johnshaven. David Lyall, gudeman of Gateside, was a douce, respectable individual, a worthy member, if not an elder, of the secession church, Johnshaven. His wife, Mrs Lyall, possessed many of the good qualities of her worthy husband, whom she highly venerated, and pithily described as being “as gude a man as ever lay at a woman’s side.” Mrs Lyall was a rigid seceder, a strict Sabbatarian, stern and rigorous in everything relating to the kirk and kirk affairs, deeply learned in polemical disquisitions, had a wondrous “gift of gab,” and by no means allowed the talent to lie idle in a napkin.

The soldier produced his billet, was kindly received, treated to the best as regarded bed and board, was communicative, and entered into all the news of the day with the worthy couple. Everything ran smoothly on the evening of Saturday, and an agreeable intimacy seemed to be established in the family; but the horror of Mrs Lyall may be conceived, when, on looking out in the morning rather early, she saw the soldier

stripped to the shirt, switching, brushing, and scrubbing his clothes on an eminence in front of the house.

“Get up, David Lyall,” she said, “get up; it ill sets you to be lying there snoring, an’ that graceless pagan brackin’ the Lord’s day wi’ a’ his might, at oor door.”

David looked up, and quietly composing himself again, said, “The articles of war, gudewife, the articles of war; puir chiel, he canna help himsel—he maun do duty Sunday as well as Saturday.”

The soldier, after cleaning his clothes and taking a stroll in the romantic dell of Denfenella adjoining, returned in time to breakfast, which was a silent meal. With Mrs Lyall there was only “mony a sad and sour look,” and on the table being cleared, she placed on it, or rather thrust, the “big ha’ Bible” immediately in front of the soldier.

“Weel, mistress,” said the soldier, “what book is this?”

“That’s a beuk, lad,” said the gude-wife, “that I muckle doubt that you and the like o’ ye ken unco little about.”

“Perhaps,” was the reply; “we shall see.”

On opening the book the soldier said, “I have seen such a book before.”

“Gin ye’ve seen sic a book before,” said Mrs Lyall, “let’s hear gin ye can read ony.”

“I don’t mind though I do,” said the soldier, and taking the Bible he read a chapter that had been marked by Mrs Lyall as one condemnatory of his seeming disregard of the Sabbath. The reading of the soldier was perfect.

“There, lad,” said David Lyall, “ye read like a minister.”

“An’ far better than mony ane o’ them,” said the mistress; “but gifts

are no graces," she continued ; " it's nae the readin' nor the hearin' that maks a gude man—na, na, it's the right and proper application—the practice, that's the real thing."

David saw that "the mistress was aboot to mount her favourite hobby-horse," and cut her lecture short by remarking that "it was time to mak ready for the kirk."

"Aye, ye'll gae to the kirk," said Mrs Lyall, "an' tak the sodger wi' ye ; and see that ye fesh the sermon hame between ye, as I am no gaun mysel the day."

The soldier acquiesced, and on their way to church Mr Lyall remarked, among other things, that "the gudewife was, if anything, precise and conceited about kirk matters an' keepin' the Sabbath day, but no that ill a body, fin fouk had the git o' her and latten gang a wee thing her ain git. I keep a calm sough mysel, for the sake o' peace, as she an' her neebour wife, Mrs Smith, gudewife o' Jackston, count themselves the Jachin an' Boaz o' our temple. Ye'll mind as muckle o' the sermon as ye can, as depend upon it she will be speirin'." The soldier said he would do his best to satisfy her on that head.

The parish church of Benholm, as well as the secession church of Johnshaven, were that day filled to overflowing more by red coats than black. On their return from church, and while dinner was discussing, Mrs Lyall inquired aboot the text at David. He told her the text.

"A bonnie text," she said ; "Mr Harper" (the name of the minister) "would say a hantle upon that ; fu did he lay out his discourse ?"

"Weel, gudewife," said David, "I can tell ye little mair aboot it ; ye may speir at the sodger there. I can tell ye he held the killivine (pencil) gaun to some tune a' the time."

"Ye've ta'en a note o' the sermon, lad ?" said the mistress. "I will see it when we get our dinner."

After dinner, and after the soldier had read the chapter of which the text formed part, in the same correct and eloquent style as he did in the morning, Mrs Lyall asked him to "favour her with a sight of the sermon." After adjusting her spectacles, Mrs Lyall examined with seeming seriousness the manuscript, page after page, glancing a look now and then at the soldier and her husband. She took off her specks, and handing back the sheets to the soldier, said—

"Weel, lad, ye are the best reader that ever I heard, an' the warst writer I ever saw ; there's naething there but dots an' strokes an' tirliewhirlies ; I canna mak a word o' sense o't ; ye've sairly neglected yer handwrite—sairly."

"That may be," replied the soldier, "but I can assure you the sermon is all there."

"Ye can read it yotrsel, then," said the gudewife.

The soldier took the manuscript and read, or rather re-delivered, the sermon, each head and particular, word for word as Mr Harper had given it. When he had concluded it, David Lyall, looking triumphantly at the mistress, said—

"Weel, gudewife, ye've gotten the sermon to Amen. Fat think ye o' that ?"

She sat in silent amazement for a considerable time, and at length ejaculated — "Fat do I think o' that ? Fat do I think o' that ? Fa' wadna think o' that ? I may just say this, that I never believed before that a red coat had sae muckle grace about it, but I've been thinkin', lad, that ye are no a sodger—at ony rate if ye are ane, ye could be something else, — I'm doon sure o' that."

The soldier stated that he was only a private soldier, that there was nothing extraordinary in what he had done, that all or nearly all the men in his regiment could just do the same thing, and that many of them were better scholars than

he pretended to be ; and taking from his knapsack a copy of the Greek New Testament, he laid it before her, saying that “as she had been so kind as allow him to read her Bible, he would favour her with a look of his, and hoped that she would now in turn read for his edification.”

Mrs Lyall examined the volume with deep attention for some time, and shaking her head, said—

“Na, na, lad ; they maun be deeper beuk-learned than me that read that beuk ; yer far ayont my thumb.”

He told her what book it was, employed the afternoon or evening of that Sabbath in reading, expounding, and giving literal translations of many of the passages of the New Testament that seemed doubtful or difficult to Mrs Lyall. She found the soldier equally conversant with all her theological authors—Bunyan, Baxter, Brown, and Boston, were at his finger-ends ; the origin and history, as well as the fathers, of the Secession Church were nothing new to him. The soldier conducted family worship that evening in a most solemn and becoming manner for David Lyall.

On resuming his march in the morning he was urgently pressed by Mrs Lyall to accept of some of her country cheer, such as cheese or butter ; in fact, she would have filled his knapsack. A complete revolution had been effected in her opinion regarding the moral, religious, and intellectual qualities of soldiers. “I aye took them for an ignorant, graceless pack, the affscourings o’ creation, but I now see that I have been far mista’en ;” and until the day of her death, which occurred many years afterwards, she would tolerate no insinuation in her presence to the prejudice of the profession. When such was attempted in her hearing, she instantly kindled up with—“Awa wi’ yer lees an’ yer havers, I’ll hear nane o’ them ; there shall nae chield speak ill o’ sodgers in my presence, na, na. Mony’s the minister that I hae seen in my house, —some better, some waur,—but nane o’ them had either the wisdom, the learning, the ready unction, of a gallant single sodger.”

The name of “the gallant single sodger” was Robert Mudie, afterwards editor of the *Dundee Advertiser* newspaper.—*Eminent Men of Fife.*

BRUNTFIELD :

A TALE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

THE war carried on in Scotland, by the friends and enemies of Queen Mary, after her departure into England, was productive of an almost complete dissolution of order, and laid the foundation of many feuds, which were kept up by private families and individuals long after all political cause of hostility had ceased. Among the most remarkable quarrels which history or tradition has recorded as arising out of that civil

broil, I know of none so deeply cherished or accompanied by so many romantic and peculiar circumstances, as one which took place between two old families of gentry in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh. Stephen Bruntfield, laird of Craighouse, had been a zealous and disinterested partisan of the queen. Robert Moubray of Barnbougle was the friend successively of Murray and Morton, and distinguished himself very

highly in their cause. During the year 1572, when Edinburgh Castle was maintained by Kirkaldy of Grange in behalf of the queen, Stephen Bruntfield held out Craighouse in the same interest, and suffered a siege from a detachment of the forces of the Regent, commanded by the laird of Barnbougle. The latter baron, a man of fierce and brutal nature, entered life as a younger brother, and at an early period chose to cast his fate among the Protestant leaders, with a view of improving his fortunes. The death of his elder brother in rebellion at Langside enabled the Regent Murray to reward his services with a grant of the patrimonial estate, of which he did not scruple to take possession by the strong hand, to the exclusion of his infant niece, the daughter of the late proprietor. Some incidents which occurred in the course of the war had inspired a mutual hatred of the most intense character into the breasts of Bruntfield and Moubray; and it was therefore with a feeling of strong personal animosity, as well as of political rancour, that the latter undertook the task of watching the motions of Bruntfield at Craighouse. Bruntfield, after holding out for many months, was obliged, along with his friends in Edinburgh Castle, to yield to the party of the Regent. Like Kirkaldy and Maitland of Lethington, he surrendered upon a promise of life and estate; but while his two friends perished, one by the hand of the executioner, the other by his own hand, he fell a victim to the sateless spite of his personal enemy, who, in conducting him to Edinburgh as a prisoner, took fire at some bitter expression on the part of the captive, and smote him dead upon the spot.

Bruntfield left a widow and three infant sons. The lady of Craighouse had been an intimate of the unfortunate Mary from her early years; was educated with her in France, in the Catholic faith; and had left her court

to become the wife of Bruntfield. It was a time calculated to change the natures of women, as well as of men. The severity with which her religion was treated in Scotland, the wrongs of her royal mistress, and finally the sufferings and death of her husband, acting upon a mind naturally enthusiastic, all conspired to alter the character of Marie Carmichael, and substitute for the rosy hues of her early years the gloom of the sepulchre and the penitentiary. She continued, after the restoration of peace, to reside in the house of her late husband; but though it was within two miles of the city, she did not for many years re-appear in public. With no society but that of her children, and the persons necessary to attend upon them, she mourned in secret over past events, seldom stirring from a particular apartment, which, in accordance with a fashion by no means uncommon, she had caused to be hung with black, and which was solely illuminated by a lamp. In the most rigorous observances of her faith she was assisted by a priest, whose occasional visits formed almost the only intercourse which she maintained with the external world. One strong passion gradually acquired a complete sway over her mind,—REVENGE,—a passion which the practice of the age had invested with a conventional respectability, and which no kind of religious feeling then known was able either to check or soften. So entirely was she absorbed by this fatal passion, that her very children at length ceased to have interest or merit in her eyes, except in so far as they appeared likely to be the means of gratifying it. One after another, as they reached the age of fourteen, she sent them to France, in order to be educated; but the accomplishment to which they were enjoined to direct their principal attention was that of martial exercise. The eldest, Stephen, returned at eighteen, a strong and active youth, with a mind of little polish or literary information,

but considered a perfect adept at sword-play. As his mother surveyed his noble form, a smile stole into the desert of her wan and widowed face, as a winter sunbeam wanders over a waste of snows. But it was a smile of more than motherly pride; she was estimating the power which that frame would have in contending with the murderous Moubrey. She was not alone pleased with the handsome figure of her first-born child; but she thought with a fiercer and faster joy upon the appearance which it would make in the single combat against the slayer of his father. Young Bruntfield, who, having been from his earliest years trained to the purpose now contemplated by his mother, rejoiced in the prospect, now lost no time in preferring before the king a charge of murder against the laird of Barnbougle, whom he at the same time challenged, according to a custom then not altogether abrogated, to prove his innocence in single combat. The king having granted the necessary licence, the fight took place in the royal park, near the palace; and to the surprise of all assembled, young Bruntfield fell under the powerful sword of his adversary. The intelligence was communicated to his mother at Craig-house, where she was found in her darkened chamber, prostrate before an image of the Virgin. The priest who had been commissioned to break the news opened his discourse in a tone intended to prepare her for the worst; but she cut him short at the very beginning with a frantic exclamation,—“I know what you would tell—the murderer’s sword has prevailed; and there are now but two, instead of three, to redress their father’s wrongs!” The melancholy incident, after the first burst of feeling, seemed only to have concentrated and increased that passion by which she had been engrossed for so many years. She appeared to feel that the death of her eldest son only formed an addition to that

debt which it was the sole object of her existence to see discharged. “Roger,” she said, “will have the death of his brother, as well as that of his father, to avenge. Animated by such a double object, his arm can hardly fail to be successful.”

Roger returned about two years after, a still handsomer, more athletic, and more accomplished youth than his brother. Instead of being daunted by the fate of Stephen, he burned but the more eagerly to wipe out the injuries of his house with the blood of Moubrey. On his application for a licence being presented to the court, it was objected by the crown lawyers that the case had been already closed by *mal fortune* of the former challenger. But, while this was the subject of their deliberation, the applicant caused so much annoyance and fear in the court circle by the threats which he gave out against the enemy of his house, that the king, whose inability to procure respect either for himself or for the law is well-known, thought it best to decide in favour of his claim. Roger Bruntfield, therefore, was permitted to fight in barras with Moubrey; but the same fortune attended him as that which had already deprived the widow of her first child. Slipping his foot in the midst of the combat, he reeled to the ground embarrassed by his cumbrous armour. Moubrey, according to the barbarous practice of the age, immediately sprang upon and despatched him. “Heaven’s will be done!” said the widow, when she heard of the fatal incident; “but *gratias Deo!* there still remains another chance.”

Henry Bruntfield, the third and last surviving son, had all along been the favourite of his mother. Though apparently cast in a softer mould than his two elder brothers, and bearing all the marks of a gentler and more amiable disposition, he in reality cherished the hope of avenging his father’s death

more deeply in the recesses of his heart, and longed more ardently to accomplish that deed than any of his brothers. His mind, naturally susceptible of the softest and tenderest impressions, had contracted the enthusiasm of his mother's wish in its strongest shape; as the fairest garments are capable of the deepest stain. The intelligence, which reached him in France, of the death of his brothers, instead of bringing to his heart the alarm and horror which might have been expected, only braced him to the adventure which he now knew to be before him. From this period he forsook the elegant learning which he had heretofore delighted to cultivate. His evenings were spent in poring over the memoirs of distinguished knights; his days were consumed in the tilt-yard of the sword-player. In due time he entered the French army, in order to add to mere science that practical hardihood, the want of which he conceived to be the cause of the death of his brothers. Though the sun of chivalry was now declining far in the occident, it was not yet altogether set. Montmorency was but just dead; Bayard was still alive,—Bayard, the knight of all others who has merited the motto, “*Sans peur et sans reproche.*” Of the lives and actions of such men, Henry Bruntfield was a devout admirer and imitator. No young knight kept a firmer seat upon his horse,—none complained less of the severities of campaigning,—none cherished lady's love with a fonder, purer, or more devout sensation. On first being introduced at the court of Henry III., he had signalled, as a matter of course, Catherine Moubray, the disinherited niece of his father's murderer, who had been educated in a French convent by her other relatives, and was now provided for in the household of the queen. The connection of this young lady with the tale of his own family, and the circumstance of her being

a sufferer in common with himself by the wickedness of one individual, would have been enough to create a deep interest respecting her in his breast. But when, in addition to these circumstances, we consider that she was beautiful, was highly accomplished, and in many other respects qualified to engage his affections, we can scarcely be surprised that such was the result of their acquaintance. Upon one point alone did these two interesting persons ever think differently. Catherine, though inspired by her friends from infancy with an entire hatred of her cruel relative, contemplated with fear and aversion the prospect of her lover being placed against him in deadly combat, and did all in her power to dissuade him from his purpose. Love, however, was of little avail against the still more deeply-rooted passion which had previously occupied his breast. Flowers thrown upon a river might have been as effectual in staying its course towards the cataract, as the gentle entreaties of Catherine Moubray in withholding Henry Bruntfield from the enterprise for which his mother had reared him—for which his brothers had died—for which he had all along moved and breathed.

At length, accomplished with all the skill which could then be acquired in arms, glowing with all the earnest feelings of youth, Henry returned to Scotland. On reaching his mother's dwelling, she clasped him, in a transport of varied feeling, to her breast, and for a long time could only gaze upon his elegant person. “My last and dearest,” she at length said, “and thou too art to be adventured upon this perilous course! Much have I bethought me of the purpose which now remains to be accomplished. I have not been without a sense of dread lest I be only doing that which is to sink my soul in flames at the day of reckoning; but yet there has been that which comforts me

also. Only yesternight I dreamed that your father appeared before me. In his hand he held a bow and three goodly shafts ; at a distance appeared the fierce and sanguinary Moubray. He desired me to shoot the arrows at that arch traitor, and I gladly obeyed. A first and a second he caught in his hand, broke, and trampled on with contempt. But the third shaft, which was the fairest and goodliest of all, pierced his guilty bosom, and he immediately expired. The revered shade at this gave me an encouraging smile, and withdrew. My Henry, thou art that *third arrow*, which is at length to avail against the shedder of our blood. The dream seems a revelation, given especially that I may have comfort in this enterprise, otherwise so revolting to a mother's feelings."

Young Bruntfield saw that his mother's wishes had only imposed upon her reason, but he made no attempt to break the charm by which she was actuated, being glad, upon any terms, to obtain her sanction for that adventure to which he was himself impelled by feelings considerably different. He therefore began, in the most deliberate manner, to take measures for bringing on the combat with Moubray. The same legal objections which had stood against the second duel were maintained against the third ; but public feeling was too favourable to the object to be easily withheld. The laird of Barnbougle, though somewhat past the bloom of life, was still a powerful and active man, and instead of expressing any fear to meet this third and more redoubted warrior, rather longed for a combat which promised, if successful, to make him one of the most renowned swordsmen of his time. He had also heard of the attachment which subsisted between Bruntfield and his niece ; and in the contemplation of an alliance which might give some force to the claims of that lady upon his estate, found a deeper and more selfish reason for accepting the challenge of

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his youthful enemy. King James himself protested against stretching the law of the *per duellum* so far ; but, sensible that there would be no peace between either the parties or their adherents till it should be decided in a fair combat, he was fain to grant the required licence.

The fight was appointed to take place on Cramond Inch, a low grassy island in the Frith of Forth, near the Castle of Barnbougle. All the preparations were made in the most approved manner by the young Duke of Lennox, who had been the friend of Bruntfield in France. On a level spot, close to the northern beach of the islet, a space was marked off, and strongly secured by a palisade. The spectators, who were almost exclusively gentlemen (the rabble not being permitted to approach), sat upon a rising ground beside the enclosure, while the space towards the sea was quite clear. At one end, surrounded by his friends, stood the laird of Barnbougle, a huge and ungainly figure, whose features displayed a mixture of ferocity and hypocrisy, in the highest degree unpleasing. At the other, also attended by a host of family allies and friends, stood the gallant Harry Bruntfield, who, if divested of his armour, might have realised the idea of a winged Mercury. A seat was erected close beside the barras for the Duke of Lennox and other courtiers, who were to act as judges ; and at a little distance upon the sea lay a small decked vessel, with a single female figure on board. After all the proper ceremonies which attended this strange legal custom had been gone through, the combatants advanced into the centre, and planting foot to foot, each with his heavy sword in his hand, waited the command which should let them loose against each other, in a combat which both knew would only be closed with the death of one or other. The word being given, the fight commenced. Moubray almost at the first pass gave his adversary a cut in the

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right limb, from which the blood was seen to flow profusely. But Bruntfield was enabled by this mishap to perceive the trick upon which his adversary chiefly depended, and, by taking care to avoid it, put Moubray nearly *hors de combat*. The fight then proceeded for a few minutes, without either gaining the least advantage over the other. Moubray was able to defend himself pretty successfully from the cuts and thrusts of his antagonist, but he could make no impression in return. The question then became one of time. It was evident that, if no lucky stroke should take effect beforehand, he who first became fatigued with the exertion would be the victim. Moubray felt his disadvantage as the elder and bulkier man, and began to fight desperately and with less caution. One tremendous blow, for which he seemed to have gathered his last strength, took effect upon Bruntfield, and brought him upon his knee, in a half-stupified state, but the elder combatant had no strength to follow up the effort. He reeled towards his youthful and sinking enemy, and stood for a few moments over him, vainly endeavouring to raise his weapon for another and final blow. Ere he could accomplish his wish, Bruntfield recovered sufficient strength to draw his dagger, and thrust it up to the hilt beneath the breastplate of his exhausted foe. The murderer of his race instantly lay dead beside him, and a shout of joy from the spectators hailed him as the victor. At the same instant a scream of more than earthly note arose from the vessel anchored near the island; a lady descended from its side into a boat,

and, rowing to the land, rushed up to the bloody scene, where she fell upon the neck of the conqueror, and pressed him with the most frantic eagerness to her bosom. The widow of Stephen Bruntfield at length found the yearnings of twenty years fulfilled,—she saw the murderer of her husband, the slayer of her two sons, dead on the sward before her, while there still survived to her as noble a child as ever blessed a mother's arms. But the revulsion of feeling produced by the event was too much for her strength; or, rather, Providence, in its righteous judgement, had resolved that so unholy a feeling as that of revenge should not be too signally gratified. She expired in the arms of her son, murmuring *Nunc dimittis, Domine*, with her latest breath.

The remainder of the tale of Bruntfield may be easily told. After a decent interval, the young laird of Craighouse married Catherine Moubray; and as the king saw it right to restore that young lady to a property originally forfeited for service to his mother, the happiness of the parties might be considered as complete. A long life of prosperity and peace was granted to them by the kindness of Heaven; and at their death they had the satisfaction of enjoying that greatest of all earthly blessings, the love and respect of a numerous and virtuous family.—*Chamber's Edinburgh Journal*, 1832.*

* The tale of Bruntfield is founded upon facts alluded to in "Birrel's Diary," "Anderson's History of Scotland" (MS., Advocates' Library), &c.

SUNSET AND SUNRISE.

BY PROFESSOR WILSON.

"THIS is the evening on which, a few days ago, we agreed to walk to the bower at the waterfall, and look at the perfection of a Scottish sunset. Everything on earth and heaven seems at this hour as beautiful as our souls could desire. Come then, my sweet Anna, come along, for by the time we have reached the bower, with your gentle steps, the great bright orb will be nearly resting its rim on what you call the Ruby Mountain. Come along, and we can return before the dew has softened a single ringlet on your fair forehead." With these words, the happy husband locked kindly within his own the arm of his young English wife ; and even in the solitude of his unfrequented groves, where no eye but his own now beheld her, looked with pride on the gracefulness and beauty that seemed so congenial with the singleness and simplicity of her soul.

They reached the bower just as the western heaven was in all its glory. To them, while they stood together gazing on that glow of fire that burns without consuming, and in whose mighty furnace the clouds and the mountain-tops are but as embers, there seemed to exist no sky but that region of it in which their spirits were entranced. Their eyes saw it—their souls felt it ; but what their eyes saw or their souls felt they knew not in the mystery of that magnificence. The vast black bars, the piled-up masses of burnished gold, the beds of softest saffron and richest purple, lying surrounded with continually fluctuating dyes of crimson, till the very sun himself was for moments unheeded in the gorgeousness his light had created ; the show of storm, but the feeling of calm, over all that tumultuous, yet settled world of cloud, that

had come floating silently and majestically together, and yet in one little hour was to be no more ;—what might not beings endowed with a sense of beauty, and greatness, and love, and fear, and terror, and eternity, feel when drawing their breath together, and turning their steadfast eyes on each other's faces, in such a scene as this ?

But from these high and bewildering imaginations, their souls returned insensibly to the real world in which their life lay ; and, still feeling the presence of that splendid sunset, although now they looked not towards it, they let their eyes glide, in mere human happiness, over the surface of the inhabited earth. The green fields, that in all varieties of form lay stretching out before them, the hedgerows of hawthorn and sweetbrier, the humble coppices, the stately groves, and, in the distance, the dark pine-forest loading the mountain side, were all their own—and so, too, were a hundred cottages, on height or hollow, shelterless or buried in shelter, and all alike dear to their humble inmates, on account of their cheerfulness or their repose. God had given to them this bright and beautiful portion of the earth, and he had given them along with it hearts and souls to feel and understand in what lay the worth of the gift, and to enjoy it with a deep and thoughtful gratitude.

"All hearts bless you, Anna ; and do you know that the Shepherd Poet, whom we once visited in his shieling, has composed a Gaelic song on our marriage, and it is now sung by many a pretty Highland girl, both in cottage and on hill-side ? They wondered, it is said, why I should have brought them an English lady ; but that was before they saw your face, or heard how sweet may

be an English voice even to a Highland ear. They love you, Anna—they would die for you, Anna ; for they have seen you with your sweet body in silk and satin, with a jewel on your forehead and pearls in your hair, moving to music in your husband's hereditary hall ; and they have seen you, too, in russet garb and ringlets unadorned, in their own smoky cottages, blithe and free as some native shepherdess of the hills. To the joyful and the sorrowful art thou alike dear ; and all my tenantry are rejoiced when you appear, whether on your palfrey on the heather, or walking through the hay or harvest-field, or sitting by the bed of sickness, or welcoming, with a gentle stateliness, the old withered mountaineer to his chieftain's gate."

The tears fell from the lady's eyes at these kind, loving, and joyful words ; and, with a sob, she leaned her cheek on her husband's bosom. "Oh! why—why should I be sad in the midst of the undeserved goodness of God? Since the furthest back time I recollect in the darkness of infancy, I have been perfectly happy. I have never lost any dear friend, as so many others have done. My father and mother live, and love me well ; blessings be upon them now, and for ever! You love me, and that so tenderly, that at times my heart is like to break. But, my husband—forgive me—pity me—but upbraid me not, when I tell you that my soul of late has often fainted within me, as now it does—for oh ! husband ! husband ! the fear of death is upon me ; and as the sun sank behind the mountain, I thought that moment of a large burial-place, and the vault in which I am to be interred."

These words gave a shock to her husband's heart, and for a few moments he knew not how to cheer and comfort her. Almost before he could speak, and while he was silently kissing her forehead, his young wife, somewhat

more composedly, said, "I strive against it—I close my eyes to contain—to crush the tears that I feel gushing up from my stricken heart ; but they force their way through, and my face is often ruefully drenched in solitude. Well may I weep to leave this world—thee—my parents—the rooms in which, for a year of perfect bliss, I have walked, sat, or slept in thy bosom—all these beautiful woods, and plains, and hills, which I have begun to feel every day more and more as belonging unto me, because I am thy wife. But, husband ! beyond, far, far beyond them all, except him of whose blood it is, do I weep to leave our baby that is now unborn. May it live to comfort you—to gladden your eyes when I am gone—yea, to bring tears sometimes into them, when its face or form may chance to remember you of the mother who bore it, and died that it might see the day."

The lady rose up with these words from her husband's bosom ; and as a sweet balmy whispering breath of wind came from the broom on the river's bank, and fanned her cheeks, she seemed to revive from that desponding dream ; and, with a faint smile, looked all round the sylvan bower. The cheerful hum of the bees, that seemed to be hastening their work among the honey-flowers before the fall of dark—the noise of the river, that had been unheard while the sun was setting—the lowing of the kine going leisurely homewards before their infant drivers—and the loud lofty song of the blackbird in his grove—these, and a thousand other mingling influences of nature, touched her heart with joy, and her eyes became altogether free from tears. Her husband, who had been deeply affected by words so new to him from her lips, seized these moments of returning peace to divert her thoughts entirely from such causeless terrors. "To this bower I brought you to show you what a Scottish landscape was, the

day after our marriage ; and from that hour to this, every look, smile, word, and deed of thine, has been after my own heart, except these foolish tears. But the dew will soon be on the grass—so come, my beloved—nay, I will not stir unless you smile. There, Anna ! you are your beautiful self again !” And they returned, cheerful and laughing, to the Hall ; the lady’s face being again as bright as if a tear had never dimmed its beauty. The glory of the sunset was almost forgotten in the sweet, fair, pensive silence of the twilight; now fast glimmering on to one of those clear summer nights which divide, for a few hours, one day from another with their transitory pomp of stars.

Before midnight, all who slept awoke. It was hoped that an heir was about to be born to that ancient house ; and there is something in the dim and solemn reverence which invests an unbroken line of ancestry, that blends easily with those deeper and more awful feelings with which the birth of a human creature, in all circumstances, is naturally regarded. Tenderly beloved by all as this young and beautiful lady was, who, coming a stranger among them, and as they felt from another land, had inspired them insensibly with a sort of pity, mingling with their pride in her loveliness and virtue, it may well be thought that now the house was agitated, and that its agitation was soon spread from cottage to cottage, to a great distance round. Many a prayer, therefore, was said for her ; and God was beseeched soon to make her, in His mercy, a joyful mother. No fears, it was said, were entertained for the lady’s life ; but after some hours of intolerable anguish of suspense, her husband, telling an old servant whether he had gone, walked out into the open air, and in a few minutes, sat down on a tombstone, without knowing that he had entered the little churchyard,

which, with the parish church, was within a few fields and groves of the house. He looked around him ; and nothing but graves—graves—graves. “This stone was erected by her husband in memory of Agnes Ilford, an Englishwoman, who died in child-bed, aged nineteen.” The inscription was, every letter of it, distinctly legible in the moonlight ; and he held his eyes fixed upon it, reading it over and over with a shudder ; and then rising up and hurrying out of the churchyard, he looked back from the gate, and thought he saw a female figure all in white, with an infant in her arms, gliding noiselessly over the graves and tombstones. But he looked more steadfastly—and it was nothing. He knew it was nothing ; but he was terrified, and turned his face away from the churchyard. The old servant advanced towards him, and he feared to look him in the face, lest he should know that his wife was a corpse.

“Life or death ?” at length he found power to utter. “My honoured lady lives, but her son breathed only a few gasps—no heir, no heir ! I was sent to tell you to come quickly to my lady’s chamber.”

In a moment the old man was alone, for, recovering from the torpidity of fear, his master had flown off like an arrow, and now with soft footsteps was stealing along the corridor towards the door of his wife’s apartment. But as he stood within a few steps of it, composing his countenance, and strengthening his heart to behold his beloved Anna lying exhausted, and too probably ill, ill indeed,—his own mother, like a shadow, came out of the room, and not knowing that she was seen, clasped her hands together upon her breast, and lifting up her eyes with an expression of despair, exclaimed, as in a petition to God, “Oh ! my poor son !—my poor son ! what will become of him !” She looked forward, and there was her son

before her, with a face like ashes, tottering and speechless. She embraced and supported him—the old and feeble supported the young and the strong. “I am blind, and must feel my way ; but help me to the bed-side, that I may sit down and kiss my dead wife. I ought to have been there, surely, when she died.”

The lady was dying, but not dead. It was thought that she was insensible, but when her husband said—“Anna, Anna !” she fixed her hitherto unnoticed eyes upon his face, and moved her lips as if speaking, but no words were heard. He stooped down and kissed her forehead, and then there was a smile over all her face, and one word, “Farewell !” At that faint and loving voice he touched her lips with his, and he must then have felt her parting breath ; for when he again looked on her face, the smile upon it was more deep, placid, steadfast, than any living smile, and a mortal silence was on her bosom that was to move no more.

They sat together, he and his mother, looking on the young, fair, and beautiful dead. Sometimes he was distracted, and paced the room raving, and with a black and gloomy aspect. Then he sat down perfectly composed, and looked alternately on the countenance of his young wife, bright, blooming, and smiling in death ; and on that of his old mother, pale, withered, and solemn in life. As yet he had no distinct thoughts of himself. Overwhelming pity for one so young, so good, so beautiful, and so happy, taken suddenly away, possessed his disconsolate soul ; and he would have wept with joy to see her restored to life, even although he were to live with her no more, though she were utterly to forget him ; for what would that be to him, so that she were but alive ! He felt that he could have borne to be separated from her by seas, or by a dungeon’s walls ; for in the strength of his love he

would have been happy, knowing that she was a living being beneath heaven’s sunshine. But in a few days is she to be buried !—And then was he forced to think upon himself, and his utter desolation, changed in a few hours from a too perfect happiness into a wretch whose existence was an anguish and a curse.

At last he could not sustain the sweet, sad, beautiful sight of that which was now lying stretched upon his marriage-bed ; and he found himself passing along the silent passages, with faint and distant lamentations meeting his ear, but scarcely recognised by his mind, until he felt the fresh air, and saw the gray dawn of morning. Slowly and unconsciously he passed on into the woods, and walked on and on, without aim or object, through the solitude of awakening nature. He heard or heeded not the wide-ranging songs of all the happy birds ; he saw not the wild-flowers beneath his feet, nor the dew diamonds that glittered on every leaf of the motionless trees. The ruins of a lonely hut on the hill-side were close to him, and he sat down in stupification, as if he had been an exile in some foreign country. He lifted up his eyes, and the sun was rising, so that all the eastern heaven was tinged with the beauty of joy. The turrets of his own ancestral mansion were visible among the dark umbrage of its ancient grove : fair were the lawns and fields that stretched away from it towards the orient light, and one bright bend of the river kindled up the dim scenery through which it rolled. His own family estate was before his eyes, and as the thought rose within his heart, “All that I see is mine,” yet felt he that the poorest beggar was richer far than he, and that in one night he had lost all that was worth possessing. He saw the church tower, and thought upon the place of graves. “There will she be buried—there will she be buried,” he repeated

with a low voice, while a groan of mortal misery startled the little moss-wren from a crevice in the ruin. He rose up, and the thought of suicide entered into his sick heart. He gazed on the river, and, murmuring aloud in his hopeless wretchedness, said, "Why should I not sink into a pool and be drowned? But oh! Anna, thou who wert so meek and pure on earth, and who art now bright and glorious in heaven, what would thy sainted and angelic spirit feel if I were to appear thus lost and wicked at the judgment-seat?"

A low voice reached his ear, and, looking round, he beheld his old, faithful, white-headed servant on his knees—him who had been his father's foster-brother, and who, in the privilege of age and fidelity and love to all belonging to that house, had followed him unregarded—had watched him as he wrung his hands, and had been praying for him to God while he continued sitting in that dismal trance upon that mouldering mass of ruins. "Oh! my young master, pardon me for being here. I wished not to overhear your words; but to me you have ever been

kind, even as a son to his father. Come, then, with the old man back into the hall, and forsake not your mother, who is sore afraid."

They returned, without speaking, down the glens and through the old woods, and the door was shut upon them. Days and nights passed on, and then a bell tolled; and the churchyard, that had sounded to many feet, was again silent. The woods around the hall were loaded with their summer glories; the river flowed on in its brightness; the smoke rose up to heaven from the quiet cottages; and nature continued the same—bright, fragrant, beautiful, and happy. But the hall stood uninhabited; the rich furniture now felt the dust; and there were none to gaze on the pictures that graced the walls. He who had been thus bereaved went across seas to distant countries, from which his tenantry, for three springs, expected his return; but their expectations were never realised, for he died abroad. His remains were brought home to Scotland, according to a request in his will, to be laid by those of his wife; and now they rest together, beside the same simple monument.

MISS PEGGY BRODIE.

BY ANDREW PICKEN.

"IF I were a man, instead of being a woman, as unfortunately I happen to be," said Miss Peggy Brodie to me, "I would call a meeting in public, on the part of the ladies, to petition the king for another war; for really, since the peace there is no such thing as any decent woman getting a husband, nor is there so much as the least stir or stramash now-a-days, even to put one in mind of such a thing. And the king,

God bless him! is a man of sense, and understands what's what perfectly," continued Miss Peggy; "and I have not the least doubt that if he were only put in possession of the real state of the sex since the peace, he would give us a war at once, for it is cruel to keep so many women in this hopeless state."

"Indeed, mem," said I, looking as wise as I was able, "you may depend upon it, you are under a mistake."

"Don't tell me, sir," replied Miss Brodie; "you men think you know everything. As if I did not understand politics sufficient to know that the king grants all reasonable petitions. I tell you, Mr What's-your-name, that the whole sex in Glasgow, from Crossmyloof to the Rotten Row, and from Anderston to Camlachie, are in a state of the utmost distress since ever the peace;—and marriages may be made in heaven, or somewhere else that I do not know of, but there is none made here-away, to my certain knowledge, since ever the sharpshooters laid down their arms, the strapping fallows!"

"I'm sure, mem," said I, "for a peaceable mañ, I have been sadly deaved about these sharpshooters."

"It's no for you to speak against the sharpshooters, Mr Thingumy!" said Miss Brodie, getting into a pet; "you that never bit a cartridge in your life, I know by your look! and kens nae mair about platoon exercise, and poother wallets, and ramrods, than my mother does! But fair fa' the time when we had a thriving war, an' drums rattlin' at every corner, an' fifer lads whistlin' up and down the streets on a market-day; an' spruce sergeants parading the Salt-market, pipe-clayed most beautiful! Then there was our ain sharpshooters, braw fallows, looking so noble in their green dresses, and lang feathers bobbing in their heads. Besides, there was the cavalry, and the Merchants' corps, and the Trades' and the Grocers' corps. Why, every young man of the least pluck was a soldier in these heartsome days, and had such speerit and such pith, and thought no more of taking a wife then, than he would of killing a Frenchman before his breakfast, if he could hae seen one."

"But, Miss Brodie," said I, "they were all so busy taking wives that they seem to have quite forgot to take you, in these happy times."

"Ye needna be so very particular in

your remarks, Mr Thingumy; for it was entirely my own fault, an' I might hae gotten a husband any morning, just for going to the Green of Glasgow, where the lads were taking their morning's drill; for it was there a' my acquaintances got men, to my certain knowledge; and now it's naething but "Mistress" this, an' "Mistress" that, wi' a' the clippy lassocks that were just bairns the other day; and there they go, oxtering wi' their men, to be sure, an' laughin' at me. Weel, it's vera provokin', sir, isn't it?"

"Deed, mem," said I, "it's rather a lamentable case. But why did you not catch a green sharpshooter yourself, in those blessed days?"

"Hoot, Mr Balgownie, it was quite my ain faut, as I said. I was perfectly ignorant of the most common principles of the art, and knew no more of the way and manner o' catching a husband, no more than if I had never been born in Glasgow. In fac', I was a perfect simpleton, an' thought it the easiest matter in the warld; an' ye see, sir, I had a wee trifle o' siller, besides my looks (which, ye ken, Mr Thingumbob, were far from being disparageable); and so I was a perfect simple, and just thocht I was like the lass in the sang—

Set her up on Tintock tap,
The wind'll blaw a man till her.

But ne'er a man was blawn to me; an' there's a' my giggling acquaintances married, ane after the ither. There's Bell Mushat, an' Jeanie Doo, an' Mary Drab, an' Beanie Sma', an' Sally Daicle—naething but "marriet," "marriet;" and here's puir me and the cat, leading a single life until this blessed day. Hoch-hey! isn't it very angersome, sir?"

"It is really a case o' great distress, when one thinks o' your worth, Miss Brodie," said I, pathetically; "and if I did not happen to be engaged myself, it's impossible to say, but—"

"Ay, there it is!" exclaimed Miss Peggy, "there it is! Every decent,

sensible man like you, that sees what I am, are just married—married themselves, and tied up. An' so I may just sit here, and blaw my fingers ower the fire wi' the cat. Hoch-hey!"

"But surely, Miss Brodie," said I, "you did not use due diligence in time and season, or you would not now be left at this sorrowful pass?"

"I let the sharpshooter times slip out o' my fingers, like a stupid simpleton, as I say; but no woman could have been more diligent than I hae been o' late years, an' a' to no purpose. Haven't I walked the Trongate? Haven't I walked the Green? Haven't I gone to a' the tea-drinkings within five miles, where I could get a corner for mysel? Haven't I gone to the kirk three times every Sunday, forby fast days, thanksgiving days, and evening preachings? Haven't I attended a' the Bible meetings, and missionary meetings, forby auxiliary societies, and branch associations? Wasn't I a member of a' the ladies' committees, and penny-a-week societies, frae Cranston Hill to the East Toll? Didn't I gang about collecting pennies, in cauld March weather, climbin' stairs, and knocking at doors like a beggar, until the folk were like to put me out, an' the vera weans on the stairs used to pin clouts to our tails, an' ca' us penny-a-week auld maids? Eh! that was a sair business, sir, an' little thanks we got; an' I got the chilblains in the feet wi' the cauld, that keepit me frae sleep for three weeks."

"It's really lamentable; but I should have thought that the saintly plan was a good one."

"So it would have been, sir, if I had had more money; but, ye see, fifty pounds a year is thought nothing o' now-a-days; an' these kinds o' people are terrible greedy o' siller. Na, na, sir, gie me the sharpshooters yet."

"Well now, Miss Brodie," said I, "as we're on the subject, let me hear

how it was you lost your precious opportunities in the volunteering time."

"Oh, sir, that was the time—volunteering! There never was such days as the volunteering days. Drums here, and bands o' music there; sodgering up, and sodgering down; an' then the young men looked so tall in their regimentals, and it was such a pleasure just to get ane o' them by the arm, and to parade wi' them before the Tontine, an' then a' your acquaintances to meet you walking wi' a braw sharpshooter, and talking about you after in every house; and such shaking hands in the Trongate, and such treating us wi' cakes in Baxter's,—for the volunteering lads were sae free o' their siller in thae days, puir chields! Oh, thae were times!"

"There are no such times now, I fear, Miss Peggy."

"Oh, no, sir. An' then the lads thought nothing to take you to the play at night, in thae days; and what a beautiful thing it was to sit in the front o' the boxes o' the big theatre in Queen Street, wi' a red-coated, or a green-coated volunteer—it was so showy, and such an attraction, and a talk. To be sure, sir, it's no a' thegither right to go openly to common playhouses; but a man must be got some place, an' ye ken the sharpshooters couldna gang to the kirk in their green dress, puir fallows."

"But you never told me, Miss Brodie, what art or mystery there is in man-catching, and yet you speak as if some of your female friends had practised something past the common to that intent."

"It's not for me to speak to you about women's affairs, Mr Balgownie; but I can tell you one thing. Do you mind lang Miss M'Whinnie, dochter of auld Willie M'Whinnie, that was elder in Mr Dumdrone's kirk?"

"I think I recollect her face," said I.

"Weel, sir, this was the way she

used to do. Ye see, she was a great walker (for she was a lang-leggit lass, although her father is a wee gutty body), and if ye took a walk in the Green or the Trongate, ye're sure to meet lang-leggit Nelly M'Whinnie, lamping wi' a parasol like a fishing-rod, simmer and winter, lookin' ower her shoulder now and then to see when she should *fa'* aff her feet."

"Fall, Miss Brodie?—What do you mean by falling?"

"Hoot, sir, ye ken naething. Wasn't it by *fa'in'* that Nelly M'Whinnie got a man? I'll tell you how. She used to walk by hersel, an' whenever she came near a handsome sharpshooter, or gentleman chield that she wished to pick acquaintance wi', she just pretended to gie a bit stumble, or to fall on one knee or so; and then, ye ken, the gentleman couldna do less than rin to lift her up, and ask if she was hurt, and so forth; an' then she wad answer so sweet, and thank him so kindly, that the man must sae something civil; and then she would say, 'Oh, sir, you are so obliging and so polite;' an' just in this way she made the pleasantest acquaintances, an' got a man by it, or a' was done."

"Ha, ha, ha! That is perfectly ridiculous, and hardly credible," said I.

"Na, ye needna laugh in the least," continued Miss Brodie, "for I'm telling you the truth; and didna the same lass break her arm wi' her *fa'ing*?"

"Break her arm, Miss Brodie! Are you serious?"

"It's perfectly true, Mr Balgownie. Ye see, sir, she was walking on speculation, in her usual manner, in the Green o' Glasgow it was, as I believe, and somewhere near the Humanity House, by the side of the Clyde, when she observed three strappin' fellows come blattering up behind her. This was an opportunity not to be let pass, an' the day being frosty, an' the road slightly slippery, afforded an excellent

pretence for a stumble at least. Weel, sir, just when the gentlemen had got within three yards o' her, Nellie gied a bit awkward sprauchle, and shot out a leg; but whether Nellie had mista'en her distance, or whether the men were up to her *fa'in'* system, an' wadna bite, never clearly appeared; but they werena forward in time to catch the lassie in their arms as she expected; an' after a sprauchle an' a stumble, down she came in good earnest, an' broke her arm."

"Ha, ha, ha! I would rather hear that story than any one of Mr Dum-drone's best discourses," said I. "But are you sure it's true?"

"Did I no see Miss M'Whinnie, the time she was laid up, wi' the broken arm in a sling? But you see, sir, the gentlemen did gather round her when they saw she was fairly whomeilt, an' gathered her up, nae doubt; an' as soon as she got better o' the broken arm, she took to *fa'in'* again. But I believe she never gaed farther than a stoyer or a stumble after that, till ance she got a man."

"And so, Miss Brodie, she did fall into a marriage?"

"Ou, 'deed did she, sir. A fallow caught her at last, as she fell; and there was nae mair walking the Trongate wi' the lang parasol, like a bellman's staff. But in the time o' the sharpshooters and the cavalry, and the Merchants' corps, and a' the corps, I mind as weel as yesterday, how a great illness took place among the young women, and neither pills nor boluses were found to be of the least service, an' the doctors were perfectly puzzled and perplexed, and knew not what to recommend in this general distress. But the young women, ane and a', prescribed for themselves, from an inward understanding o' their complaints, and nothing, they said, would cure the prevailing sickness but a walk in the morning in the Green o' Glasgow.

Now, sir, it happened so providential, the whole time that this influenza lasted, that the Sharpshooter corps, and the Cavalry corps, and the Trades' corps, and the Merchants' corps, and the Grocers' corps, and a' the corps were exercising in the Green o' Glasgow, where a' the young ladies were walking for their health. It was so beautiful and good for the ladies, when they were sick, to see thae sharpshooters, how they marched, wheeled, an' whooped, an' whooped, an' ran this way, and that way, an' whiles they fired on their knees, an' then they would clap down on their backs, and fire at us, puir chields. And then, ye see, just when we had gotten an appetite for our breakfasts by our walk, the corps would be dismissed, and then the volunteer lads couldna but spread themselves among the ladies that were outside, just to spier after their complaints; an' then naething but link arm wi' the sharpshooters an' the other corps, dizzens in a row, an' be escorted hame to breakfast. Many a lass that was quite poorly and badly was relieved by these morning walks, and are now married women. Ah, thae were pleasant days, Mr Balgownie!"

"But, dear me, Miss Brodie," I said, "how did it happen that you were allowed to remain single all this time? Had you no wooers at all?"

"What do you mean, sir, by asking me such a question? Nae wooers! I tell you I had dizzens o' lads running after me night and day, in thae pleasant tines."

"Well, but I don't mean in the common way. I mean, had you any real sweetheart—any absolute offer?"

"Offer, sir! Indeed I had more than one. Wasna there Peter Shanks, the hosier, that perfectly plagued me, the dirty body? But ye see, sir, I couldna bear the creature, though he had twa houses in Camlachie; for, to tell you my weakness, sir, my heart was set upon—"

"Upon whom, Miss Brodie? Ah, tell me!"

"Upon a sharpshooter."

"Bless my heart! But if you would just let me hear the tale."

"Ah, sir, it's a pitiful story," said Miss Peggy, becoming lachrymose.

"I delight in pitiful stories," said I, taking out my handkerchief.

"Weel, sir,—'love and grief are sair to bide,' as the sang says, and my heart wasna made o' the adamant rock; so ye see, sir, there was a lad they ca'd Pate Peters, an' he was in the sharpshooters; and he sat just quite near me in Mr Dumdrone's kirk, for ye see, sir, it was there we fell in. Oh, sir, Pate was a beautiful youth: teeth like the ivory, an' eyes as black as the slae, and cheeks as red as the rose."

"Ah, Miss Brodie, Miss Brodie!"

"An' when he was dressed in his sharpshooter's dress,—ah, sir, but my heart was aye too, too susceptible. I will not trouble you, sir, wi' the history o' our love, which would have come to the most happy termination, but for a forward cutty of a companion o' mine, of the name of Jess Barbour. But there can be nae doubt but Pate Peters was a true lover o' me; for he used to come hame wi' me frae Mr Dumdrone's preaching whenever Jess wasna there, and I'm sure his heart burned wi' a reciprocal flame. But ae night, sir,—I'll ne'er forget that night!—I was coming hame frae a tea-drinking at Mr Warps', the manufacturer on the other side o' Clyde, when just as I got to the end o' the wooden brig next the Green, wha does I meet but Pate Peters!"

"Weel, sir, it was a moonlight night,—just such as lovers walk about in, an' Pate and me linked arm-in-arm, walked and walked, round the Green o' Glasgow. We stopped by the side o' Clyde, an' lookit up at the moon.

"'Miss Peggy,' says he, 'do ye see that moon?'

"'Yes,' says I.

"That changeable moon," says he, "is the emblem o' falseness in love."

"Yes, Mr Peters," said I, an' my heart was ready to melt.

"But I will never be false in love!" says he.

"I hope you will be true until death," says I.

"To be sure I will, Miss Brodie," says he; these were his very words."

"Ah, Miss Peggy," I said, as I saw she was unable to get on, "that is quite affecting."

"But he talked so sensibly, sir," continued Miss Brodie; "he spoke even of marriage as plain as a man could speak. 'Miss Peggy,' said he, 'do you remember what Mr Dumdrone, the minister, said last Sabbath? He said marriage was made in heaven; and he said that Solomon, the wisest of men, expressly said, in the Proverbs, he that getteth a good wife getteth a good thing'—Was not that plain speaking, Mr Balgownie?"

"Nothing could be plainer, Miss Peggy; but I'm interested in your story."

"Weel, sir, he came home to the door wi' me, and—it's not for me to tell the endearments that passed between us!—So, sir, I went to sleep wi' a light heart, an' was for several days considering and contriving about our marriage, when—what do you think?—in three weeks, word was brought to me that the false and cruel man was married to Jess Barbour!"

"Bless me, Miss Brodie, what a woful story! It's just like a romance?"

"So it is, Mr Balgownie," said Miss Peggy, all blubbered with weeping. "It's perfect romantic. Ye see, sir, what trials I had in love! But you're not going away in that manner, sir?"

"Oh, yes, Miss Brodie," said I, taking my hat; "I'm not able to stand it any longer."

"You're a feeling man," said she, shaking me by the hand; "you're a man o' sweet feeling, Mr Balgownie."

"You're an ill-used woman, Miss Brodie!—Adieu, Miss Brodie!"—*The Dominie's Legacy.*

THE DEATH OF A PREJUDICE.

BY THOMAS AIRD.

AT a late hour one Saturday evening, as I was proceeding homewards along one of the crowded streets of our metropolis, I felt myself distinctly tapped on the shoulder, and, on looking round, a bareheaded man, dressed in a night-gown, thus abruptly questioned me—

"Did you ever, sir, thank God for preserving your reason?"

On my answering in the negative—

"Then do it now," said he, "for I have lost mine."

Notwithstanding the grotesque accompaniments of the man's dress, and

his undignified face, disfigured by a large red nose, the above appeal to me was striking and sublimely pathetic; and when he bowed to me with an unsteady fervour and withdrew immediately, I could not resist following him, which I was the more inclined to do, as he seemed to be labouring under some frenzy, and might need to be looked after.

There was another reason for my being particularly interested in him: I had seen him before; and his appearance and interruption had once before

given me great disgust. It was thus :— On my return to Scotland, after an absence of five years, which I had passed in the West Indies, I found the one beloved dead, for whom had been all my hopes and all my good behaviour through those long years. When all the world, with the hard severity of truth and prudence, frowned on the quick reckless spirit of my youth, she alone had been my gentle prophetess, and sweetly told that my better heart should one day, and that soon, give the lie to the cold prudential foreboders. For her sweet sake, I tried to be as a good man should be ; and when I returned to my native land, it was all for her, to bring her by that one dearest, closest tie, near to the heart which (I speak not of my own vanity, but to her praise) she had won to manly bearing. O God ! O God ! I found her in the dust,—in her early grave ; no more to love me, no more to give me her sweet approval. It was then my melancholy pleasure to seek the place where last we parted by the burn in the lonely glen. As I approached the place, to throw myself down on the very same green spot on which she had sat when last we met, I found it occupied by a stranger ; I withdrew, but to return the following evening. I found the sacred spot again preoccupied by the same stranger, who, independent of his coarse red face, his flattened, ill-shaped, bald head (for he sat looking into his hat), and the undignified precaution of his coat-skirts carefully drawn aside, to let him sit on his outspread handkerchief, disgusted me by the mere circumstance of his unseasonable appearance in such a place, which had thus twice interrupted the yearning of my heart, to rest me there one hour alone. This second night also I hastily withdrew. I came a third night, and found a continuance of the interruption. The same individual was on the same spot, muttering to himself, and chucking pebbles into a dark pool

of the burn immediately before him. I retired, cursing him in my heart, and came no more back to the place.

Now, in the frenzied man who accosted me, as above-mentioned, on the street by night, I recognized at once the individual who had so interrupted me some months before, in the lonely glen by the side of the burn ; and, in addition to the reason already given for my wish now to follow him, there was the superadded anxiety to be kind to a man in such distress, whom, perhaps in the very beginning of his sorrows, I had heartily and unreasonably cursed. I was still following him, when a woman, advanced in life, rushed past me, and, laying hold of him, cried loudly for assistance. This was easily found in such a place ; and the poor man was, without delay, forcibly carried back to her house, where, on my following, I learned that he was a lodger with the woman, that he was sick of a brain fever, and that, during a brief interval in her watching of him, he had made his escape down-stairs, and had got upon the street. I was now deeply interested in the poor fellow, and determined to see him again the following morning, which I did, and found him much worse. On making inquiry at the woman of the house respecting him, she told me that he had no relatives in this country, though he was a Scotchman ; that he was a half-pay officer in his Majesty's service ; that he did not seem to want money ; that he was a noble-hearted, generous man. She added, moreover, that he had lodged in her house two months ; and that, previous to his illness, he had spoken of a friend whom he expected every day to visit him from a distant part of the country, to make arrangements for their going together to the continent.

In two days more, poor Lieutenant Crabbe (such, I learned, was his name and commission) died ; and, by a curious dispensation of Providence, I ordered

the funeral, and laid in the grave the head of the man whom, only a few months before, I had cursed as a disgusting, impertinent fellow. The alien-mourners had withdrawn from the sodded grave, and I had just paid the sexton for this last office to poor Crabbe, when the woman in whose house he had died advanced with a young man, apparently an officer, in whose countenance haste and unexpected affliction were strongly working. "That's the gentleman, sir," said the woman, pointing to myself.

"Very well, good woman," said the stranger youth, whose tones bespoke him an Englishman, and whose voice, as he spoke, seemed broken with deep sorrow. "I will see you again, within an hour, at your house, and settle all matters." The woman, who had doubtless come to show him the churchyard, hereupon retired; and the young Englishman, coming up to me, grasped me kindly by the hand, whilst his eyes glistened with tears.

"So, sir," said he, "you have kindly fulfilled my office here, which would to God I had been in time to do myself for poor Crabbe! You did not know him, I believe?"

"No," I answered.

"But I did," returned the youth; "and a braver, nobler heart never beat in the frame of a man. He has been most unhappy, poor fellow, in his relatives."

"I am sorry to hear it," I could only reply.

"If I could honour you in any way, sir," rejoined the youth, "which your heart cares for, beyond its own noble joy, in acting the manly and humane part which you have acted towards my poor friend, I would delight to honour you. You are at least entitled to some information about the deceased, which I may give you in a way which will best show the praise and the heart of poor Crabbe. I have some letters here

in my pocket, which I brought with me, alas! that he might explain something to me, which they all, more or less contain, relative to a piece of special business; from one of them I shall read an extract, relative to his early history, and the miserable occasion on which he found his long-lost father, whom, after long and patient efforts to trace his parents, he was at length directed to seek in one of your villages in the south of Scotland."

The particular letter was selected, and the young Englishman, over the grave of his friend, read as follows:—

"I could have wept tears of blood, on finding things as they are with the unhappy old man who is indeed my father. I shall speak to you now as I would commune with my own heart; but yet it must be in mild terms, lest I be wickedly unfilial. Is not this awful? From the very little which I knew of myself ere I came to this country, and from information which I have gathered within these two weeks from the old clergyman of this village, it appears that my mother had died a few days after giving me birth, and that my uncle, who had never been satisfied with the marriage, took me, when very young, from my father, whose unhappy peculiarities led him readily to resign me; gave me my mother's name, and carried me with him to Holland, where he was a merchant. He was very kind to me in my youth; and, when I was of proper age, bought me a commission in the British army, in which I have served, as you know, for nearly ten years, and which, you also know, I was obliged to leave, in consequence of a wound in one of my ankles, which, subject to occasional swelling, has rendered me quite unfit for travel. My uncle died about three years ago, and left me heir to his effects, which were considerable. Nothing in his papers led me to suppose that my father might yet be living, but I learned the fact from

a confidential friend of his, who communicated it to me, not very wisely, perhaps, since he could not tell me even my real name. Bitterly condemning my uncle's cruel policy, which had not allowed him to hold any intercourse whatever with my father, and which had cut me off from the natural guardian of my life, I hastened over to this country, with no certain hope of success in finding out whose I was, beyond what my knowledge that I bore my mother's name led me to entertain. I had my own romance connected with the pursuit. I said to myself, that I might have little sisters, who should be glad to own me, unworthy though I was ; I might bring comfort to a good old man, whose infirmities of age were canonized by the respect due to his sanctity; who, in short, had nothing of age but its reverence ; and who, like another patriarch, was to fall upon my neck, and weep for joy like a little child. Every night I was on board, hastening to this country, I saw my dream-sisters, so kind, so beautiful : they washed my feet ; they looked at the scars of my wounds ; they were proud of me for having been a soldier, and leaned on my arm as we went to church, before all the people, who were lingering in the sunny churchyard ; and the good old man went before, looking oft back to see that we were near behind, accommodating his step to show that he too was one of the party, though he did his best to appear self-denied.

"After getting the clue, as mentioned in my last letter to you, I took a seat in the mail, which I was told would pass at a little distance from the village whither I was bound. Would to God I had set out the day before, that so I might have prevented a horrid thing ! The coach was stopped for me at a little bridge, that I might get out ; the village, about a mile off, was pointed out to me ; and I was advised to follow a small foot-path, which led along by a

rivulet, as being the nearest way to the place in question. Twilight was now beginning to deepen among the elms that skirted the path into which I had struck ; and in this softest hour of nature, I had no other thought than that I was drawing near a home of peace. I know not whether the glen which I was traversing could have roused such indescribable emotions within me, had I not guessed that scenes were before me which my childhood must have often seen ; but every successive revelation of the pass up which I was going,—pool after pool ringed by night insects, and shot athwart on the surface by those unaccountable diverging lines, so fine, so rapid, which may be the sport too of invisible insects,—stream after stream, with its enamelled manes of cool green velvet, which anon twined themselves out of sight beneath the rooted brakes,—one shy green nook in the bank after another, overwaved by the long pensile boughs of trees, and fringed with many a fairy mass of blent wild flowers ;—all these made me start, as at the melancholy recurrence of long-forgotten dreams. And when the blue heron rose from the stream where he had been wading, and with slow flagging wing crossed and re-crossed the water, and then went up the darkened valley to seek his lone haunt by the mountain spring, I was sure I had seen the very same scene, and the very same bird, some time in my life before. My dear Stanley, you cannot guess why I dwell so long on these circumstances ! For it enters my very heart with anguish, to tell the moral contrast to my hopes, and to these peaceful accompaniments of outward nature. It must be told. Listen to what follows.

"I had not walked more than a quarter of a mile up the valley, when I heard feeble cries for assistance, as of some one in the last extremity, drowning in the stream. I made what haste I could, and, on getting round a sloping head-

land of the bank, which shot forward to the edge of the rounding water, I found myself close upon a company of fellows, habited like Christmas mummers, apparently amusing themselves with the struggles of a person in the water, who, even as he secured a footing, and got his head above, was again pushed down by his cruel assailants. I was upon them ere they were aware, and reached one fellow, who seemed particularly active, an excellent thwack with my ratan, from which, however, recovering, he took to his heels, followed by his associates. My next business was to relieve the object of their cruelty ; but this was no easy task ; for, being probably by this time quite exhausted, he had yielded to the current ; and, ere I could reach him, was rolled down into a large black pool. He was on the point of sinking for ever, when I caught hold of him—good God ! an old man—by his gray hair, and hauled him out upon the bank, where he lay to all appearance quite dead. Using such means as were in my power to assist in restoring suspended animation, I succeeded so well, that ere long the poor old man shewed symptoms of returning life. I looked round me in this emergency, but there was neither house nor living person to be seen ; so what could I do, but take the old, bare headed man on my back, and carry him to the village, which I knew was not far off. And there, God in heaven ! who should I find him to be, but my own father !

"To you, Stanley, I can say everything which I dare whisper to my own heart ; but this is a matter which even my own private bosom tries to eschew. It seems—it seems that the unhappy old man is narrow-hearted—a miser, as they term it here ; and that for some low petty thefts he was subjected by some fellows of the village to the above ducking. I know well, Stanley, you will not despise me for all this, nor because I must now wear my own name of Crabbe,

which I am determined, in justice to that unhappy old father, henceforth to do. On the contrary, you will only advise me well how to win upon his harder nature, and bring him round to more liberal habits. Listen to the following scheme of my own for the same purpose, which struck me one evening as I sat 'chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy,' beside the pool whence I rescued the poor old man. For indeed—indeed, I must grapple with the realities of the moral evil, however painful or disgusting. That being is my father ; and no one can tell how much his nature may have been warped and kept perverse by the loss of the proper objects of natural affection. Is it not my bounden duty, then, to be found to him, and by my constant presence, to open his heart, which has been too much constringed by his lonely situation ? I shall hedge him round, in the first place, from insults ; I shall live with him, in his own house, all at my expense ; and our household economy shall be as liberal as my finances will permit. I shall give much money in charity, and make him the dispenser of it ; for our best feelings are improved by outward practice. Whenever I may be honoured by an invitation to a good man's table, the slightest hint to bring him with me shall be taken advantage of ; and he shall go, that the civilities of honourable men may help his self-respect, and thereby his virtue. Now, may God aid me in this moral experiment, to try it with discretion, to make the poor old man doubly mine own !"

"From this extract," said the young Englishman, carefully folding up his deceased friend's letter, "you will see something of the exalted nature of poor Ramsay—Crabbe, I should say, according to his own decided wish. I may here mention, that the death of the old man, which took place not many weeks after the above brutalities were inflicted upon him, and which, in all likelihood,

was hastened by the unhappy infliction, never allowed his son to put in practice those noble institutes of moral discipline, which he had devised, to repair and beautify the degraded fountain of his life. I doubt not that this miserable end of his old parent, and the sense of his own utter loneliness, in respect of kindred, preyed upon the generous soldier, and helped to bring on that frenzy of fever, which so soon turned his large, his noble heart, into dust and oblivion. Peace be with his ashes ; and everlasting honour wait upon his name !—To-morrow morning, sir,” continued the youth, “ I set out again for England, and I should like to bear your name along with me, coupled with the memory which shall never leave me, of your disinterested kindness towards my late friend. I talk little of thanks ; for I hold you well repaid, by the consciousness of having done the last duties of humanity for a brave and good man.”

According to the Englishman’s request, I gave him my name, and received his in return ; and, shaking

hands over the grave of poor Crabbe, we parted.

“ Good God !” said I to myself, as I left the churchyard, “ it appears, then, that at the very moment when this generous soldier was meditating a wise and moral plan to win his debased parent to honour and salvation—at that very moment I was allowing my heart to entertain a groundless feeling of dislike to him.” My second more pleasing reflection was, that this unmanly prejudice had easily given way. How could it last, under the awful presence of Death, who is the great apostle of human charity ? Moreover, from the course of incidents above mentioned, I have derived this important lesson for myself :—Never to allow a hasty opinion, drawn from a man’s little peculiarities of manner or appearance, particularly from the features of his face, or the shape of his head, as explained by the low quackeries of Lavater and Spurzheim, to decide unfavourably against a man, who, for aught I truly know, may be worthy of unqualified esteem.

ANENT AULD GRANDFAITHER, AUNTIE BELL, MY AIN FAITHER, &c.

By D. M. MOIR.

The sun rises bright in France,
And fair sets he ;
But he has tint the blithe blink he had
In my ain countree.

Allan Cunningham.

AULD Grandfather died when I was a growing callant, some seven or aught year auld ; yet I mind him full weel ; it being a curious thing how early such matters take haud of ane’s memory. He was a straught, tall, auld man, with a shining bell-pow, and reverend white locks hinging down about his haffets ;

(3)

a Roman nose, and twa cheeks blooming through the winter of his lang age like roses, when, puir body, he was sand-blind with infirmity. In his latter days he was hardly able to crawl about alane ; but used to sit resting himself on the truff seat before our door, leaning forit his head on his staff, and find-

ing a kind of pleasure in feeling the beams of God's ain sun beaking on him. A blackbird, that he had tamed, hung above his head in a whand cage of my faither's making ; and he had taken a pride in learning it to whistle twa or three turns of his ain favourite sang, "Ower the Water to Charlie."

I recollect, as well as yesterday, that on the Sundays he wore a braid baninet with a red worsted cherry on the tap o't ; and had a single-breasted coat, square in the tails, of light Gilmerton blue, with plaited white buttons, bigger than crown pieces. His waistcoat was low in the neck, and had flap pouches, wherein he kept his mull for rappee, and his tobacco box. To look at him, wi' his rig-and-fur Shetland hose pulled up ower his knees, and his big glancing buckles in his shoon, sitting at our door-cheek, clean and tidy as he was kept, was just as if one of the arcient patriarchs had been left on earth, to let succeeding survivors witness a picture of hoary and venerable eld. Puir body, mony a bit Gibraltar-rock and gingerbread did he give to me, as he would pat me on the head, and prophesy that I would be a great man yet ; and sing me bits of auld sangs, about the bloody times of the Rebellion and Prince Charlie. There was nothing that I liked so well as to hear him set a-going with his auld warld stories and liltis ; though my mother used sometimes to say, "Wheesht, grandfaither, ye ken it's no canny to let out a word of thae things ; let byganes be byganes, and forgotten." He never liked to gie trouble, so a rebuke of this kind would put a tether to his tongue for a wee ; but when we were left by ourselves, I used aye to egg him on to tell me what he had come through in his far-away travels beyond the broad seas ; and of the famous battles he had seen and shed his precious blood in ; for his pinkie was hacked off by a dragoon of Cornel Gardiner's down by at Prestonpans, and he had

catched a bullet with his ankle over in the north at Culloden. So it was no wonder that he liked to crack about these times, though they had brought him muckle and no little mischief, having obliged him to skulk like another Cain among the Highland hills and heather, for many a long month and day, homeless and hungry. Not dauring to be seen in his own country, where his head would have been chacked off like a sybo, he took leg-bail in a ship, over the sea, among the Dutch folk ; where he followed out his lawful trade of a cooper, making girrs for the herring barrels, and so on ; and sending, when he could find time and opportunity, such savings from his wages as he could afford, for the maintenance of his wife and small family of three helpless weans, that he had been obliged to leave, dowie and destitute, at their native home of pleasant Dalkeith.

At lang and last, when the breeze had blown ower, and the feverish pulse of the country began to grow calm and cool, auld grandfather took a longing to see his native land ; and, though not free of jeopardy from king's cutters on the sea, and from spies on shore, he risked his neck over in a sloop from Rotterdam to Aberlady, that came across with a valuable cargo of smuggled gin. When grandfaither had been obliged to take the wings of flight for the preservation of his life and liberty, my faither was a wean at grannie's breast : so, by her fending,—for she was a canny, industrious body, and kept a bit shop, in the which she sold oatmeal and red herrings, needles and prins, potaties and tape, and cabbage, and what not,—he had grown a strapping laddie of eleven or twelve, helping his two sisters, one of whom perished of the measles in the dear year, to gang errands, chap sand, carty water, and keep the housie clean. I have heard him say, when auld grandfather came to their door at the dead of night, tirling, like a thief o' darkness,

at the window-brod to get in, that he was so altered in his voice and lingo, that no living soul kenned him, not even the wife of his bosom ; so he had to put grannie in mind of things that had happened between them, before she would allow my faither to lift the sneck, or draw the bar. Many and many a year, for gude kens how long after, I've heard tell that his speech was so Dutchified as to be scarcely kenspeckle to a Scotch European ; but Nature is powerful, and in the course of time he came in the upshot to gather his words together like a Christian.

Of my auntie Bell, that, as I have just said, died of measles in the deat year, at the age of fourteen, I have no story to tell but one, and that a short one, though not without a sprinkling of interest.

Among her other ways of doing, grannie kept a cow, and sold the milk round about to the neighbours in a pitcher, whiles carried by my faither, and whiles by my aunties, at the ransom of a ha'penny the mutchkin. Well, ye observe, that the cow ran yield, and it was as plain as pease that the cow was with calf ;—Geordie Drowth, the horse-doctor, could have made solemn affidavy on that head. So they waited on, and better waited on, for the prowie's calving, keeping it upon draff and ait-strae in the byre ; till one morning every thing seemed in a fair way, and my auntie Bell was set out to keep watch and ward.

Some of her companions, howsoever, chancing to come by, took her out to the back of the house to have a game at the pallall ; and, in the interim, Donald Bogie, the tinkler from Yet-holm, came and left his little jackass in the byre, while he was selling about his crockery of cups and saucers and brown plates, on the auld ane, through the town, in two creels.

In the middle of auntie Bell's game,

she heard an unco noise in the byre ; and, kenning that she had neglected her charge, she ran round the gable, and opened the door in a great hurry ; when, seeing the beastie, she pulled it to again, and fleeing, half out of breath, into the kitchen, cried, "Come away, come away, mother, as fast as ye can. Eh, lyst, the cow's cauffed,—and it's a cuddie !"

The weaver he gaed up the stair,
Dancing and singing ;
A bunch o' bobbins at his back,
Rattling and ringing.

Old Song.

My own faither, that is to say, auld Mansie Wauch, with regard to myself, but young Mansie, with reference to my grandfaither, after having run the errands, and done his best to grannie during his early years, was, at the age of thirteen, as I have heard him tell, bound a 'prentice to the weaver trade, which, from that day and date, for better for worse, he prosecuted to the hour of his death ; —I should rather have said to within a fortnight o't, for he lay for that time in the mortal fever, that cut through the thread of his existence. Alas ! as Job says, " How time flies like a weaver's shuttle ! "

He was a tall, thin, lowering man, blackaviced, and something in the physog like myself, though scarcely so weel-fauered ; with a kind of blueness about his chin, as if his beard grew of that colour,—which I scarcely think it would do, but might arise either from the dust of the blue cloth, constantly flying about the shop, taking a rest there, or from his having a custom of giving it a rub now and then with his finger and thumb, both of which were dyed of that colour, as well as his apron, from rubbing against and handling the webs of checkit clath in the loom.

Ill would it become me, I trust a dutiful son, to say that my faither was anything but a decent, industrious, hard-

working man, doing everything for the good of his family, and winning the respect of all that kenned the value of his worth. As to his decency, few—very few indeed—laid beneath the mools of Dalkeith kirkyard, made their beds there, leaving a better name behind them ; and as to industry, it is but little to say that he toiled the very flesh off his bones, ca'ing the shuttle from Monday morning till Saturday night, from the rising up of the sun even to the going down thereof ; and whiles, when opportunity led him, or occasion required, digging and delving away at the bit kail-yard, till moon and stars were in the lift, and the dews of heaven that fell on his head were like the oil that flowed from Aaron's beard, even to the skirts of his garment. But what will ye say there ? Some are born with a silver spoon in their mouths, and others with a parritch-stick. Of the latter was my faither, for, with all his fechting, he never was able much more than to keep our heads above the ocean of debt. Whatever was denied him, a kind Providence, howsoever, enabled him to do that ; and so he departed this life, contented, leaving to my mother and me, the two survivors, the prideful remembrance of being, respectively, she the widow, and me the son, of an honest man. Some left with twenty thousand cannot boast so much ; so ilka ane has their comforts.

Having never entered much into public life, further than attending the kirk twice every Sabbath, and thrice when there was evening service, the days of my faither glided over like the waters of a deep river that make little noise in their course ; so I do not know whether to lament or rejoice at having almost nothing to record of him. Had Bonaparte as little ill to account for, it would be well this day for him ; but, losh me ! I had amaist skipped ower his weddin.

In the five-and-twentieth year of his

age, he had fallen in love with my mother, Marion Laverock, at the christening of a neebour's bairn, where they both happened to forgather, little, I daresay, jalousing, at the time their een first met, that fate had destined them for a pair, and to be the honoured parents of me, their only bairn. Seeing my father's heart was catched as in the net of the fowler, she took every lawful means, such as adding another knot to her cockernony, putting up her hair in screw curls, and so on, to follow up her advantage ; the result of all which was, that after three months' courtship, she wrote a letter out to her friends at Loanhead, telling them of what was more than likely to happen, and giving a kind invitation to such of them as might think it worth their whiles, to come in and be spectators of the ceremony. And a prime day I am told they had of it, having, by advice of more than one, consented to make it a penny wedding ; and hiring Deacon Lawrie's malt-barn at five shillings for the express purpose.

Many yet living, among whom James Batter, who was the best man, and Duncan Imrie, the heel-cutter in the Fleshmarket Close, are yet above-board to bear solemn testimony to the grandness of the occasion, and the uncountable numerousness of the company, with such a display of mutton broth, swimming thick with raisins,—and roasted jiggets of lamb,—to say nothing of mashed turnips and champed potatoes,—as had not been seen in the wide parish of Dalkeith in the memory of man. It was not only my faither's bridal day, but it brought many a lad and lass together by way of partners at foursome reels and Hieland jigs, whose courtship did not end in smoke, couple above couple dating the day of their happiness from that famous forgatherin'. There were no less than three fiddlers, two of them blind with the sma'-pox, and one naturally, and a piper with his

drone and chanter, playing as many pibrochs as would have deaved a mill-happer,—all skirling, scraping, and bumming away throughither, the whole afternoon and night, and keeping half the country-side dancing, capering, and cutting, in strathspey step and quick time, as if they were without a weary, or had not a bone in their bodies. In the days of darkness the whole concern would have been imputed to magic and glamour ; and douce folk, finding how they were transgressing over their usual bounds, would have looked about them for the wooden pin that auld Michael Scott the warlock drove in behind the door, leaving the family to dance themselves to death at their leisure.

Had the business ended in dancing, so far well, for a sound sleep would have brought a blithe wakening, and all be tight and right again ; but, alas and alackaday ! the violent heat and fume of foment they were all thrown into caused the emptying of so many ale-tankers, and the swallowing of so muckle toddy, by way of cooling and refreshing the company, that they all got as fou as the Baltic ; and many ploys, that shall be nameless, were the result of a sober ceremony, whereby two douce and decent people, Mansie Wauch, my honoured faither, and Marion Laverock, my respected mother, were linked together, for better for worse, in the lawful bonds of honest wedlock.

It seems as if Providence, reserving every thing famous and remarkable for me, allowed little or nothing of consequence to happen to my faither, who had few crooks in his lot ; at least, I never learned, either from him or any other body, of any adventures likely seriously to interest the world at large. I have heard tell, indeed, that he once got a terrible fright by taking the bounty, during the American war, from an Eirish corporal, of the name of Dochart O'Flaucherty, at Dalkeith fair, when he was at his 'prenticeship ; he, not being

accustomed to malt-liquor, having got foulish and frisky—which was not his natural disposition — over half-a-bottle of potter. From this it will easily be seen, in the first place, that it would be with a fecht that his master would get him off, by obliging the corporal to take back the trepan money ; in the second place, how long a date back it is since the Eirish began to be the death of us ; and in conclusion, that my honoured faither got such a fleg as to spane him effectually, for the space of ten years, from every drinkable stronger than good spring-well water. Let the unwary take caution ; and may this be a wholesome lesson to all whom it may concern.

In this family history it becomes me, as an honest man, to make passing mention of my faither's sister, auntie Mysie, that married a carpenter and undertaker in the town of Jedburgh ; and who, in the course of nature and industry, came to be in a prosperous and thriving way ; indeed so much so, as to be raised from the rank of a private head of a family, and at last elected, by a majority of two votes over a famous cow-doctor, a member of the town-council itself.

There is a good story, howsoever, connected with this business, with which I shall make myself free to wind up this somewhat fusty and fuzionless chapter.

Well, ye see, some great lord,—I forget his name, but no matter,—that had made a most tremendous sum of money, either by foul or fair means, among the blacks in the East Indies, had returned before he died, to lay his bones at home, as yellow as a Limerick glove, and as rich as Dives in the New Testament. He kept flunkies with plush small-clothes, and sky-blue coats with scarlet-velvet cuffs and collars,—lived like a princie, and settled, as I said before, in the neighbourhood of Jedburgh.

The body, though as brown as a

toad's back, was as pridefu' and full of power as auld king Nebuchadneisher ; and how to exhibit all his purple and fine linen, he aye thought and better thought, till at last the happy determination came ower his mind like a flash of lightning, to invite the bailies, deacons, and town-council, all in a body, to come in and dine with him.

Save us ! what a brushing of coats, such a switching of stoury trousers, and bleaching of white cotton stockings, as took place before the catastrophe of the feast, never before happened since Jed-dart was a burgh. Some of them that were forward, and geyan bold in the spirit, crawled aloud for joy at being able to boast that they had received an invitation letter to dine with a great lord ; while others, as proud as peacocks of the honour, yet not very sure as to their being up to the trade of behaving themselves at the tables of the great, were mostly dung stupid with not kenning what to think. A council meeting or two was held in the gloamings, to take such a serious business into consideration ; some expressing their fears and inward down-sinking, while others cheered them up with a fillip of pleasant consolation. Scarcely a word of the matter for which they were summoned together by the town-offisher—and which was about the mending of the old bell-rope—was discussed by any of them. So, after a sowd of toddy was swallowed, with the hopes of making them brave men, and good soldiers of the magistracy, they all plucked up a proud spirit, and, do or die, determined to march in a body up to the gate, and forward to the table of his lordship.

My uncle, who had been one of the ringleaders of the chicken-hearted, crap away up among the rest, with his new blue coat on, shining fresh from the ironing of the goose, but keeping well among the thick, to be as little ken-speckle as possible ; for all the folk of

the town were at their doors and windows to witness the great occasion of the town-council going away up like gentlemen of rank to take their dinner with his lordship. That it was a terrible trial to all cannot be for a moment denied ; yet some of them behaved themselves decently ; and if we confess that others trembled in the knees, as if they were marching to a field of battle, it was all in the course of human nature.

Yet ye would wonder how they came on by degrees ; and, to cut a long tale short, at length found themselves in a great big room, like a palace in a fairy tale, full of grand pictures with gold frames, and looking-glasses like the side of a house, where they could see down to their very shoes. For a while they were like men in a dream, perfectly dazzled and dumfounded ; and it was five minutes before they could either see a seat, or think of sitting down. With the reflection of the looking-glasses, one of the bailies was so possessed within himself that he tried to chair himself where chair was none, and landed, not very softly, on the carpet ; while another of the deacons, a fat and dumpyman, as he was trying to make a bow, and throw out his leg behind him, tramped on a favourite Newfoundland dog's tail, that, wakening out of his slumbers with a yell that made the roof ring, played drive against my uncle, who was standing abaft, and wheeled him like a butterflee, side foremost, against a table with a heap o' flowers on't, where, in trying to kep himself, he drove his head, like a battering ram, through a looking-glass, and bleached back on his hands and feet on the carpet.

Seeing what had happened, they were all frightened ; but his lordship, after laughing heartily, was politer, and kent better about manners than all that ; so, bidding the flunkies hurry away with the fragments of the china jugs and jars,

they found themselves, sweating with terror and vexation, ranged along silk settees, cracking about the weather and other wonderfuls.

Such a dinner! The fume of it went round about their hearts like myrrh and frankincense. The landlord took the head of the table, the bailies the right and left of him; the deacons and councillors were ranged along the sides like files of sodgers; and the chaplain, at the foot, said grace. It is entirely out of the power of man to set down on paper all that they got to eat and drink; and such was the effect of French cookery, that they did not ken fish from flesh. Howsoever, for all that, they laid their lugs in everything that lay before them, and what they could not eat with forks, they supped with spoons; so it was all to one purpose.

When the dishes were removing, each had a large blue glass bowl full of water, and a clean calendered damask towel, put down by a smart flunkey before him; and many of them that had not helped themselves well to the wine while they were eating their steaks and French frigassees, were now vexed to death on that score, imagining that nothing remained for them but to digt their nebs and flee up.

Ignorant folk should not judge rashly, and the worthy town-council were here in error; for their surmises, however feasible, did the landlord wrong. In a minute they had fresh wine decanters ranged down before them, filled with liquors of all variety of colours, red, green, and blue; and the table was covered with dishes full of jargonelles and pippins, raisins and almonds, shell walnuts and plum-damases, with nut-crackers, and everything else they could think of eating; so that after drinking “The King, and long life to him,” and “The constitution of the country at home and abroad,” and “Success to trade,” and ‘A good harvest,’ and ‘May ne’er waur be among us,’ and “Botheration

to the French,” and “Corny toes and short shoes to the foes of old Scotland,” and so on, their tongues began at length not to be so tacked; and the weight of their own dignity, that had taken flight before his lordship, came back and rested on their shoulders.

In the course of the evening, his lordship whispered to one of the flunkies to bring in some things—they could not hear what—as the company might like them. The wise ones thought within themselves that the best aye comes hindmost; so in brushed a powdered valet, with three dishes on his arm of twisted black things, just like sticks of Gibraltar-rock, but different in the colour.

Bailie Bowie helped himself to a jargonelle, and Deacon Purves to a wheen raisins; and my uncle, to show that he was not frightened, and kent what he was about, helped himself to one of the long black things, which, without much ceremony, he shoved into his mouth, and began to. Two or three more, seeing that my uncle was up to trap, followed his example, and chewed away like nine-year olds.

Instead of the curious-looking black thing being sweet as honey,—for so they expected,—they soon found they had catched a Tartar; for it had a confounded bitter tobacco taste. Manners, however, forbade them laying it down again, more especially as his lordship, like a man dumfoundered, was aye keeping his eye on them. So away they chewed, and better chewed, and whammelled them round in their mouths, first in one cheek, and then in the other, taking now and then a mouthful of drink to wash the trash down, then chewing away again, and syne another whammel from one cheek to the other, and syne another mouthful, while the whole time their een were staring in their heads like mad, and the faces they made may be imagined, but cannot be described. His lordship gave his eyes a rub, and thought he was

dreaming, but no—there they were bodily, chewing and whammelling, and making faces ; so no wonder that, in keeping in his laugh, he sprung a button from his waistcoat, and was like to drop down from his chair, through the floor, in an ecstasy of astonishment, seeing they were all growing sea-sick, and as pale as stucco-images.

Frightened out of his wits at last, that he would be the death of the whole council, and that more of them would poison themselves, he took up one of the cigars,—every one knows cigars now, for they are fashionable among the very sweeps,—which he lighted at the candle, and commenced puffing like a tobacco-pipe.

My uncle and the rest, if they were ill before, were worse now ; so when they got to the open air, instead of growing better, they grew sicker and sicker, till they were wagging from side to side like ships in a storm ; and, no kenning whether their heels or heads were uppermost, went spinning round about like peeries.

"A little spark may make muckle wark." It is perfectly wonderful what

great events spring out of trifles, or what seem to common eyes but trifles. I do not allude to the nine days' deadly sickness, that was the legacy of every one that ate his cigar, but to the awful truth, that at the next election of councillors, my poor uncle Jamie was completely blackballed—a general spite having been taken to him in the town-hall, on account of having led the magistracy wrong, by doing what he ought to have let alone, thereby making himself and the rest a topic of amusement to the world at large, for many and many a month.

Others, to be sure, it becomes me to mention, have another version of the story, and impute the cause of his having been turned out to the implacable wrath of old Bailie Bogie, whose best black coat, square in the tails, that he had worn only on the Sundays for nine years, was totally spoiled, on their way home in the dark from his lordship's, by a tremendous blast that my unfortunate uncle happened, in the course of nature, to let flee in the frenzy of a deadly upthrowing.—*The Life of Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Dalkeith.*

JOHN BROWN;

OR, THE HOUSE IN THE MUIR.

JOHN BROWN, the Ayr, or as he was more commonly designated by the neighbours, the Religious, Carrier, had been absent, during the month of January (1685), from his home in the neighbourhood of Muirkirk, for several days. The weather, in the meantime, had become extremely stormy, and a very considerable fall of snow had taken place. His only daughter, a girl of about eleven years of age, had frequently, during the afternoon of

Saturday, looked out from the cottage door into the drift, in order to report to her mother, who was occupied with the nursing of an infant brother, the anxious occurrences of the evening. "Help," too, the domestic cur, had not remained an uninterested spectator of the general anxiety, but by several fruitless and silent excursions into the night, had given indisputable testimony that the object of his search had not yet neared the solitary shieling. It was a

long, and a wild road, lying over an almost trackless muir, along which John Brown had to come ; and the cart track, which even in better weather, and with the advantage of more daylight, might easily be mistaken, had undoubtedly, ere this, become invisible. Besides, John had long been a marked bird, having rendered himself obnoxious to the "powers that were," by his adherence to the Sanquhar declaration, his attending field-preachings, or as they were termed "conventions," his harbouring of persecuted ministers, and, above all, by a moral, a sober, and a proverbially devout and religious conduct.

In an age when immorality was held to be synonymous with loyalty, and irreligion with non-resistance and passive obedience, it was exceedingly dangerous to wear such a character, and, accordingly, there had not been wanting information to the prejudice of this quiet and godly man. Clavers, who, ever since the affair of Drumclog, had discovered more of the merciless and revengeful despot than of the veteran or hero, had marked his name, according to report, in his black list ; and when once Clavers had taken his resolution and his measures, the Lord have mercy upon those against whom these were pointed ! He seldom hesitated in carrying his plans into effect, although his path lay over the trampled and lacerated feelings of humanity. Omens, too, of an unfriendly and evil-boding import, had not been wanting in the cottage of John to increase the alarm. The cat had mewed suspiciously, had appeared restless, and had continued to glare in hideous indication from beneath the kitchen bed. The death-watch, which had not been noticed since the decease of the gudeman's mother, was again, in the breathless pause of listening suspense, heard to chick distinctly ; and the cock, instead of crowing, as on

ordinary occasions, immediately before day-dawn, had originated a sudden and alarming flap of his wings, succeeded by a fearful scream, long before the usual bed-time.

It was a gloomy crisis ; and after a considerable time spent in dark and despairing reflection, the evening lamp was at last trimmed, and the peat fire repaired into something approaching to a cheerful flame. But all would not do ; for whilst the soul within is disquieted and in suspense, all external means and appliances are inadequate to procure comfort, or impart even an air of cheerfulness. At last Help suddenly lifted his head from the hearth, shook his ears, sprung to his feet, and with something betwixt a growl and a bark, rushed towards the door, at which the yird drift was now entering copiously. It was, however, a false alarm. The cow had moved beyond the "hallan," or the mice had come into sudden contact, and squeaked behind the rafters. John, too, it was reasoned betwixt mother and daughter, was always so regular and pointed in his arrivals, and this being Saturday night, it was not a little or an insignificant obstruction that could have prevented him from being home, in due time, at least, for family worship. His cart, in fact, had usually been pitched up, with the trams supported against the peat-stack, by two o'clock in the afternoon ; and the evening of his arrival from his weekly excursion to Ayr was always an occasion of affectionate intercourse, and more than ordinary interest. Whilst his disconsolate wife, therefore, turned her eyes towards her husband's chair, and to the family Bible, which lay in a "bole" within reach of his hand, and at the same time listened to the howling and intermitting gusts of the storm, she could not avoid—it was not in nature that she should—contrasting her present with her former situation ; thus imparting even to objects of the most

kindly and comforting association, all the livid and darkening hues of her disconsolate mind. But there is a depth and a reach in true and genuine piety, which the plummet of sorrow may never measure. True religion sinks into the heart as the refreshing dew does into the chinks and the crevices of the dry and parched soil ; and the very fissures of affliction, the cleavings of the soul, present a more ready and inviting, as well as efficient access, to the softening influence of piety.

This poor woman began gradually to think less of danger, and more of God—to consider as a set-off against all her fruitless uneasiness, the vigilance and benevolence of that powerful Being, to whom, and to whose will, the elements, in all their combinations and relations, are subservient ; and having quieted her younger child in the cradle, and intimated her intention by a signal to her daughter, she proceeded to take down the family Bible, and to read out in a soft, and subdued, but most devout and impressive voice, the following lines :—

I waited for the Lord my God,
And patiently did bear ;
At length to me he did incline
My voice and cry to hear.

These two solitary worshippers of Him whose eyes are on the just, and whose ear is open to their cry, had proceeded to the beginning of the fourth verse of this psalm, and were actually employed in singing with an increased and increasing degree of fervour and devotion, the following trustful and consolatory expressions—

O blessed is the man whose trust
Upon the Lord relies,

when the symphony of another and a well-known voice was felt to be present, and they became at once assured that the beloved object of their solicitude had joined them, unseen and unperceived, in the worship. This was felt by all to be as it ought to have been ; nor did the natural and instinctive desire to accom-

modate the weary and snow-covered traveller with such conveniences and appliances as his present condition manifestly demanded, prevent the psalm-singing from going on, and the service from being finished with all suitable decency. Having thus, in the first instance, rendered thanks unto God, and blessed and magnified that mercy which pervades, and directs, and over-rules every agent in nature, no time was lost in attending to the secondary objects of inquiry and manifestation, and the kind heart overflowed, whilst the tongue and the hand were busied in “answer meet” and in “accommodation suitable.”

In all the wide range of Scotland’s muirs and mountains, straths and glens, there was not to be found this evening a happier family than that over which John Brown, the religious carrier, now presided. The affectionate inquiries and solicitous attentions of his wife,—of his partner trusty and tried, not only under the cares and duties of life, but in the faith, in the bonds of the covenant, and in all the similarity of sentiment and apprehension upon religious subjects, without which no matrimonial union can possibly ensure happiness,—were deeply felt and fully appreciated. They two had sat together in the “Torrwood,” listening to the free and fearless accents of excommunication, as they rolled in dire and in blasting destiny from the half-inspired lips of the learned and intrepid Mr Donald Cargill. They had, at the risk of their lives, harboured for a season, and enjoyed the comfortable communion and fellowship of Mr Richard Cameron, immediately previous to his death in the unfortunate encounter at “Airsmoss.” They had followed into and out the shire of Ayr, the zealous and eloquent Mr John King, and that even in spite of the interdict of council, and after that a price had been set upon the preacher’s head. Their oldest child had been baptised by a Presbyterian and ejected minister under night, and

in the midst of a wreath of snow, and the youngest was still awaiting the arrival of an approven servant of God, to receive the same sanctified ordinance. And if at times a darker thought passed suddenly across the disc of their sunny hearts, and if the cause of a poor persecuted remnant, the interests of a reformed, and suffering, and bleeding church, supervened in cloud upon the general quietude and acquiescence of their souls, this was instantly relieved and dispersed by a deeper, and more sanctified and more trustful tone of feeling ; whilst amidst the twilight beams of prophecy, and the invigorating exercise of faith, the heart was disciplined and habituated into hope, and reliance, and assurance. And if at times the halloo, and the yells, and the clatter of persecution, were heard upon the hill-side, or up the glen, where the Covenanters' Cave was discovered, and five honest men were butchered under a sunny morning, and in cold blood,—and if the voice of Clavers, or of his immediate deputy in the work of bloody oppression, “Red Rob,” came occasionally in the accents of vindictive exclamation, upon the breeze of evening ; yet hitherto the humble “Cottage in the Muir” had escaped notice, and the tread and tramp of man and horse had passed mercifully, and almost miraculously by. The general current of events closed in upon such occasional sources of agitation and alarm, leaving the house in the muir in possession of all that domestic happiness, and even quietude, which its retirement and its inmates were calculated to ensure and to participate.

Early next morning the cottage of John Brown was surrounded by a troop of dragoons, with Clavers at their head. John, who had probably a presentiment of what might happen, urged his wife and daughter to remain within doors, insisting that as the soldiers were, in all likelihood, in search of some other

individual, he should soon be able to dismiss them. By this time the noise, occasioned by the trampling and neighing of horses, commingled with the hoarse and husky laugh and vociferations of the dragoons, had brought John, half-dressed and in his night-cap, to the door. Clavers immediately accosted him by name ; and in a manner peculiar to himself, intended for something betwixt the expression of fun and irony, he proceeded to make inquiries respecting one “Samuel Aitkin, a godly man, and a minister of the word, one outrageously addicted to prayer, and occasionally found with the sword of the flesh in one hand, and that of the spirit in the other, disseminating sedition, and propagating disloyalty among his Majesty's lieges.”

John admitted at once that the worthy person referred to was not unknown to him, asserting, however, at the same time, that of his present residence or place of hiding he was not free to speak. “No doubt, no doubt,” rejoined the questioner, “you, to be sure, know nothing!—how should you, all innocence and ignorance as you are? But here is a little chip of the old block, which may probably recollect better, and save us the trouble of blowing out her father's brains, just by way of making him remember a little more accurately.” “You, my little farthing rush-light,” continued “Red Rob,”* alighting from his horse, and seizing the girl rudely, and with prodigious force by the wrists, —“you remember an old man with a long beard and a bald head, who was here a few days ago, baptizing your sister, and giving many good advices to father and mother, and who is now

* “Red Rob,” the “Bothwell,” probably, of “Old Mortality,” was, in fact, the right hand man of Clavers on all occasions, and has caused himself long to be remembered amidst the peasantry of the West of Scotland, not only by the dragoon's red cloak, which he wore, but still more by his hands, crimsoned in the blood of his countrymen !

within a few miles of this house, just up in a nice snug cave in the glen there, to which you can readily and instantly conduct us, you know?" The girl looked first at her mother, who had now advanced into the doorway, then at her father, and latterly drooped her head, and continued to preserve a complete silence.

"And so," continued the questioner, "you are dumb; you cannot speak; your tongue is a little obstinate or so, and you must not tell family secrets. But what think you, my little chick, of speaking with your fingers, of having a pat and a proper and a pertinent answer just ready, my love, at your finger ends, as one may say. As the Lord lives, and as my soul lives, but this will make a dainty nose-gay" (displaying a thumbkin or finger-screw) "for my sweet little Covenanter; and then" (applying the instrument of torture, meanwhile, and adjusting it to the thumb) "you will have no manner of trouble whatever in recollecting yourself; it will just come to you like the lug of a stoup, and don't knit your brows so" (for the pain had become insufferable); "then we shall have you quite chatty and amusing, I warrant." The mother, who could stand this no longer, rushed upon the brutal executioner, and with expostulations, threats, and the most impassioned entreaties, endeavoured to relax the questioner's twist.

"Can *you*, mistress, recollect anything of this man we are in quest of?" resumed Clavers, haughtily. "It may save us *both* some trouble, and your daughter a continuance and increase of her present suffering, if you will just have the politeness to make us acquainted with what you happen to know upon the subject." The poor woman seemed for an instant to hesitate; and her daughter looked most piteously and distractedly into her countenance, as if expectant and desirous of respite,

through her mother's compliance. "Woman!" exclaimed the husband, in a tone of indignant surprise, "hast thou so soon forgot thy God? And shall the fear of anything which man can do induce thee to betray innocent blood?" He said no more; but he had said enough, for from that instant the whole tone of his wife's feelings was changed, and her soul was wound up as if by the hand of Omnipotence, into resolution and daring. "Bravo!" exclaimed the arch persecutor, "Bravo! old Canticles; thou word'st it well; and so you three pretty innocents have laid your holy heads together, and you have resolved to die, should it so please God and us, with a secret in your breast, and a lie in your mouth, like the rest of your psalm-singing, hypocritical, canting sect, rather than discover gude Mr Aitkin!—pious Mr Aitken!—worthy Mr Aitken! But we shall try what light this little telescope of mine will afford upon the subject," pointing at the same time to a carabine or holster pistol, which hung suspended from the saddle of his horse. "This cold frosty morning," continued Clavers, "requires that one should be employed, were it for no other purpose than just to gain heat by the exercise. And so, old pragmatical, in order that you may not catch cold, by so early an exposure to the keen air, we will take the liberty," (hereupon the whole troop gathered round, and presented muskets), "for the benefit of society, and for the honour and safety of the King, never to speak of the glory of God and the good of souls,—simply and unceremoniously, and in the neatest and most expeditious manner imaginable, to *blow out your brains.*" John Brown dropped down instantly, and as it were instinctively, upon his knees, whilst his wife stood by in seeming composure, and his daughter had happily become insensible to all external objects and transactions whatever. "What!" exclaimed Clavers,

"and so you must pray too, to be sure, and we shall have a last speech and a dying testimony lifted up in the presence of peat-stack and clay walls and snow wreaths ; but as these are pretty staunch and confirmed loyalists, I do not care though we entrust you with five minutes of devotional exercise, provided you steer clear of King, Council, and Richard Cameron,—so proceed, good John, but be short and pithy. My lambs are not accustomed to long prayers, nor will they readily soften under the pathetic whining of your devotions." But in this last surmise Clavers was for once mistaken ; for the prayer of this poor and uneducated man ascended that morning in expressions at once so earnest, so devout, and so overpoweringly pathetic, that deep silence succeeded at last to oaths and ribaldry ; and as the following concluding sentences were pronounced, there were evident marks of better and relenting feelings :— "And now, gude Lord," continued this death-doomed and truly Christian sufferer, "since Thou hast nae mair use for Thy servant in this world, and since it is Thy good and rightful pleasure that I should serve Thee better and love Thee more elsewhere, I leave this puir widow woman, with the helpless and fatherless children, upon Thy hands. We have been happy in each other here, and now that we are to part for awhile, we maun e'en look forward to a more perfect and enduring happiness hereafter. As for the puir blindfolded and infatuated creatures, the present ministers of Thy will, Lord, reclaim them from the error and the evil of their courses ere it be too late ; and may they who have sat in judgment and in oppression in this lonely place, and on this blessed morning, and upon a puir weak defenceless fellow-creature, find that mercy at last from Thee which they have this day refused to Thy unworthy but faithful servant." "Now, Isbel," continued this

defenceless and amiable martyr, "the time is come at last, of which, you know, I told you on that day when first I proposed to unite hand and heart with yours ; and are you willing, for the love of God and His rightful authority, to part with me thus ?" To which the poor woman replied with perfect composure, "The Lord gave, and He taketh away. I have had a sweet loan of you, my dear John, and I can part with you for His sake, as freely as ever I parted with a mouthful of meat to the hungry, or a night's lodging to the weary and benighted traveller." So saying, she approached her still kneeling and blindfolded husband, clasped him round the neck, kissed and embraced him closely, and then lifting up her person into an attitude of determined endurance, and eying from head to foot every soldier who stood with his carbine levelled, she retired slowly and firmly to the spot which she had formerly occupied. "Come, come, let's have no more of this whining work," interrupted Clavers suddenly. "Soldiers ! do your duty." But the words fell upon a circle of statues ; and though they all stood with their muskets presented, there was not a finger which had power to draw the fatal trigger. Then ensued an awful pause, through which a "God Almighty bless your tender hearts," was heard coming from the lips of the now agitated and almost distracted wife. But Clavers was not in the habit of giving his orders twice, or of expostulating with disobedience. So, extracting a pistol from the holster of his saddle, he primed and cocked it, and then walking firmly and slowly up through the circle close to the ear of his victim,

There was a momentary murmur of discontent and of disapprobation amongst the men as they looked upon the change which a single awful instant had effected ; and even "Red Rob," though

a Covenanting slug still stuck smarting by in his shoulder, had the hardihood to mutter, loud enough to be heard, "By God, this is too bad!" The widow of John Brown gave one, and but one shriek of horror as the fatal engine exploded ; and then, addressing herself leisurely, as if to the discharge of some ordinary domestic duty, she began to unfold a napkin from her neck. "What think ye, good woman, of your bonny man now?" vociferated Clavers, returning, at the same time, the pistol, with a plunge, into the holster from which it had been extracted. "I had always good reason," replied the woman firmly and deliberately, "to think weel o' him, and I think mair o' him now than ever. But how will Graham of Claverhouse account to God and man for this morning's work?" continued the respondent firmly. "To man," answered the ruffian, "I can be answerable ; and as to God, I will take Him in my own hands." He then marched off, and left her with the corpse. She spread the

napkin leisurely upon the snow, gathered up the scattered fragments of her husband's head, covered his body with a plaid, and sitting down with her youngest and yet unbaptised infant, wept bitterly.

The cottage, and the kail-yard, and the peat-stack, and the whole little establishment of John Brown, the religious carrier, have long disappeared from the heath and the muir ; but the little spot, within one of the windings of the burn, where the "House in the Muir" stood, is still green amidst surrounding heath ; and in the very centre of that spot there lies a slab, or flat stone, now almost covered over with grass, upon which, with a little clearing away of the moss from the faded characters, the following rude but expressive lines may still be read :—

Clavers might murder godly Brown,
But could not rob him of his crown ;
Here in this place from earth he took departure,
Now he has got the garland of the martyr.

Blackwood's Magazine, 1822.

TRADITIONS OF THE OLD TOLBOOTH OF EDINBURGH.

BY ROBERT CHAMBERS, LL.D.

CHAPTER I.

WHOSOEVER is fortunate enough to have seen Edinburgh previous to the year 1817—when as yet the greater part of its pristine character was entire, and before the stupendous grandeur, and dense old-fashioned substantiality, which originally distinguished it, had been swept away by the united efforts of fire and foolery—must remember the Old Tolbooth. At the north-west corner of St Giles's Church, and almost in the very centre of a crowded street,

stood this tall, narrow, antique, and gloomy-looking pile, with its black stanchioned windows opening through its dingy walls, like the apertures of a hearse, and having its western gable penetrated by sundry suspicious-looking holes, which occasionally served—*horresco referens*—for the projection of the gallows. The fabric was four stories high, and might occupy an area of fifty feet by thirty. At the west end there was a low projection of little

more than one story, surmounted by a railed platform, which served for executions. This, as well as other parts of the building, contained shops.

On the north side, there remained the marks of what had once been a sort of bridge communicating between the Tolbooth and the houses immediately opposite. This part of the building got the name of the "Purses," on account of its having been the place where, in former times, on the King's birth-day, the magistrates delivered donations of as many pence as the King was years old to the same number of beggars or "blue-gowns." There was a very dark room on this side, which was latterly used as a guard-house by the right venerable military police of Edinburgh, but which had formerly been the fashionable silk-shop of the father of the celebrated Francis Horner. At the east end there was nothing remarkable, except an iron box, attached to the wall, for the reception of small donations in behalf of the poor prisoners, over which was a painted board, containing some quotations from Scripture. In the lower flat of the south and sunny side, besides a shop, there was a den for the accommodation of the outer door-keeper, and where it was necessary to apply when admission was required, and the old gray-haired man was not found at the door. The main door was at the bottom of the great turret or turnpike stair, which projected from the south-east corner. It was a small but very strong door, full of large headed nails, and having an enormous lock, with a flap to conceal the keyhole, which could itself be locked, but was generally left open.

One important feature in the externals of the Tolbooth was, that about one third of the building, including the turnpike, was of ashlar work—that is, smooth freestone—while the rest seemed of coarser and more modern construction, besides having a turnpike about the

centre, without a door at the bottom. The floors of the "west end," as it was always called, were somewhat above the level of those in the "east end," and in recent times the purposes of these different quarters was quite distinct—the former containing the debtors, and the latter the criminals. As the "east end" contained the hall in which the Scottish Parliament formerly met, we may safely suppose it to have been the oldest part of the building—an hypothesis which derives additional credit from the various appearance of the two quarters—the one having been apparently designed for a more noble purpose than the other. The eastern division must have been of vast antiquity, as James the Third fenced a Parliament in it, and the magistrates of Edinburgh let the lower flat for booths or shops, so early as the year 1480.

On passing the outer door, where the rioters of 1736 thundered with their sledge-hammers, and finally burnt down all that interposed between them and their prey, the keeper instantly involved the entrant in darkness by reclosing the gloomy portal. A flight of about twenty steps then led to an inner door, which, being duly knocked, was opened by a bottle-nosed personage denominated "Peter," who, like his sainted namesake, always carried two or three large keys. You then entered "the hall," which, being free to all the prisoners except those of the "east end," was usually filled with a crowd of shabby-looking, but very merry loungers. This being also the chapel of the jail, contained an old pulpit of singular fashion,—such a pulpit as one could imagine John Knox to have preached from; which, indeed, he was traditionally said to have actually done. At the right-hand side of the pulpit was a door leading up the large turnpike to the apartments occupied by the criminals, one of which was of plate-iron. This door was always shut,

except when food was taken up to the prisoners.

On the north side of the hall was the “Captain’s Room,” a small place like a counting-room, but adorned with two fearful old muskets and a sword, together with the sheath of a bayonet, and one or two bandoliers, alike understood to hang there for the defence of the jail. On the west end of the hall hung a board, on which—the production, probably, of some insolvent poetaster—were inscribed the following emphatic lines :—

A prison is a house of care,
A place where none can thrive,
A touchstone true to try a friend,
A grave for men alive—
Sometimes a place of right,
Sometimes a place of wrong,
Sometimes a place for jades and thieves,
And honest men among.

The historical recollections connected with “the hall” ought not to be passed over. Here Mary delivered what Lindsay and other old historians call her “painted orations.” Here Murray wheedled, and Morton frowned. This was the scene of Charles’s ill-omened attempts to revoke the possessions of the Church ; and here, when his commissioner, Nithsdale, was deputed to urge that measure, did the Presbyterian nobles prepare to set active violence in opposition to the claims of right and the royal will. On that occasion, old Belhaven, under pretence of infirmity, took hold of his neighbour, the Earl of Dumfries, with one hand, while with the other he grasped a dagger beneath his clothes, ready, in case the act of revocation were passed, to plunge it into his bosom.

From the hall a lobby extended to the bottom of the central staircase already mentioned, which led to the different apartments—about twelve in number—appropriated to the use of the debtors. This stair was narrow, spiral, and steep—three bad qualities, which the stranger found but imperfectly obviated

by the use of a greasy rope that served by way of balustrade. This nasty convenience was not rendered one whit more comfortable by the intelligence, usually communicated by some of the inmates, that it had hanged a man ! In the apartments to which this stair led, there was nothing remarkable, except that in one of them part of the wall seemed badly plastered. This was the temporary covering of the square hole through which the gallows-tree was planted. We remember communing with a person who lodged in this room at the time of an execution. He had had the curiosity, in the impossibility of seeing the execution, to try if he could feel it. At the time when he heard the psalms and other devotions of the culprit concluded, and when he knew, from the awful silence of the crowd, that the signal was just about to be given, he sat down upon the end of the beam, and soon after distinctly felt the motion occasioned by the fall of the unfortunate person, and thus, as it were, played at “see-saw” with the criminal.

The annals of crime are of greater value than is generally supposed. Criminals form an interesting portion of mankind. They are entirely different from *us*—divided from us by a pale which we will not, dare not overleap, but from the safe side of which we may survey, with curious eyes, the strange proceedings which go on beyond. They are interesting, often, on account of their courage—on account of their having dared something which we timorously and anxiously avoid. A murderer or a robber is quite as remarkable a person, for this reason, as a soldier who has braved some flesh-shaking danger. He must have given way to some excessive passion ; and all who have ever been transported beyond the bounds of reason by the violence of any passion whatever, are entitled to the wonder, if not the admiration, of ‘the rest of the species.

Among the inmates of the Old Tolbooth, some of whom had inhabited it for many years, there were preserved a few legendary particulars respecting criminals of distinction, who had formerly been within its walls. Some of these I have been fortunate enough to pick up.

One of the most distinguished traits in the character of the Old Tolbooth was, that it had no power of retention over people of quality. It had something like that faculty which Falstaff attributes to the lion and himself—of knowing men who ought to be respected on account of their rank. Almost every criminal of more than the ordinary rank ever yet confined in it, somehow or other contrived to get free. An insane peer, who, about the time of the Union, assassinated a schoolmaster that had married a girl to whom he had paid improper addresses, escaped while under sentence of death. We are uncertain whether the following curious fact relates to that nobleman, or to some other titled offender. It was contrived that the prisoner should be conveyed out of the Tolbooth in a trunk, and carried by a porter to Leith, where some sailors were to be ready with a boat to take him aboard a vessel about to leave Scotland. The plot succeeded so far as the escape from jail was concerned, but was knocked on the head by an unlucky and most ridiculous *contretemps*. It so happened that the porter, in arranging the trunk upon his back, placed the end which corresponded with the feet of the prisoner *uppermost*. The head of the unfortunate nobleman was therefore pressed against the lower end of the box, and had to sustain the weight of the whole body. The posture was the most uneasy imaginable. Yet life was preferable to ease. He permitted himself to be taken away. The porter trudged along the Krames with the trunk, quite unconscious of its contents, and soon reached the High Street, which he also traversed. On reaching the Netherbow,

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he met an acquaintance, who asked him where he was going with that large burden. To Leith, was the answer. The other enquired if the job was good enough to afford a potation before proceeding farther upon so long a journey. This being replied to in the affirmative, and the carrier of the box feeling in his throat the philosophy of his friend's enquiry, it was agreed that they should adjourn to a neighbouring tavern. Meanwhile, the third party, whose inclinations had not been consulted in this arrangement, felt in his neck the agony of ten thousand decapitations, and almost wished that it were at once well over with him in the Grassmarket. But his agonies were not destined to be of long duration. The porter, in depositing him upon the causeway, happened to make the end of the trunk come down with such precipitation, that, unable to bear it any longer, the prisoner fairly roared out, and immediately after fainted. The consternation of the porter, on hearing a noise from his burden, was of course excessive; but he soon acquired presence of mind enough to conceive the occasion. He proceeded to unloose and to burst open the trunk, when the hapless nobleman was discovered in a state of insensibility; and as a crowd collected immediately, and the City Guard were not long in coming forward, there was of course no farther chance of escape. The prisoner did not revive from his swoon till he had been safely deposited in his old quarters. But, if we recollect aright, he eventually escaped in another way.

Of Porteous, whose crime—if crime existed—was so sufficiently atoned for by the mode of his death, an anecdote which has the additional merit of being connected with the Old Tolbooth, may here be acceptable. One day, some years before his trial, as he was walking up Liberton's Wynd, he encountered one of the numerous hens, which, along with swine, then haunted the streets of

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the Scottish capital. For some reason which has not been recorded, he struck this hen with his cane, so that it immediately died. The affair caused the neighbours to gather round, and it was universally thought that the case was peculiarly hard, inasmuch as the bird was a "clocker," and left behind it a numerous brood of orphan chickens. Before the captain had left the spot, the proprietrix of the hen, an old woman who lived in the upper flat of a house close by, looked over her window, and poured down upon the slayer's head a whole "gardenloo" of obloquy and reproach, saying, among other things, that "she wished he might have as many witnesses present at his hinder-end as there were feathers in that hen."*

Porteous went away, not unaffected, as it would appear, by these idle words. On the night destined to be his last on earth, he told the story of the hen to the friends who then met in the jail to celebrate his reprieve from the execution which was to have taken place that day ; and the prophetess of Liberton's Wynd was honoured with general ridicule for the failure of her imprecation. Before the merry-meeting, however, was over, the sound of the "dead-drum," beat by the approaching rioters, fell upon their ears, and Porteous, as if struck all at once with the certainty of death, exclaimed, "D——n the wife ! she is right yet !" Some of his friends suggested that it might be the fire-drum ; but he would not give ear to such consolations, and fairly abandoned all hope of life. Before another hour had passed, he was in eternity.

Nicol Brown, a butcher, executed in

* It is but charity to suppose Porteous might, in this case, be only endeavouring to introduce a better system of street police than had formerly prevailed. It is not many years since the magistrates of a southern burgh drew down the unqualified wrath of all the good women there by attempting to confiscate and remove the filth which had been privileged to grace the causeway from time immemorial.

1753 for the murder of his wife, was not the least remarkable tenant of the Tolbooth during the last century. A singular story is told of this wretched man. One evening, long before his death, as he was drinking with some other butchers in a tavern somewhere about the Grassmarket, a dispute arose about how long it might be allowable to keep flesh before it was eaten. From less to more, the argument proceeded to bets ; and Brown offered to eat a pound of the oldest and "worst" flesh that could be produced, under the penalty of a guinea. A regular bet was taken, and a deputation of the company went away to fetch the stuff which should put Nicol's stomach to the test. It so happened that a criminal—generally affirmed to have been the celebrated Nicol Muschat—had been recently hung in chains at the Gallow-lee, and it entered into the heads of these monsters that they would apply in that quarter for the required flesh. They accordingly provided themselves with a ladder and other necessary articles, and, though it was now near midnight, had the courage to go down that still and solitary road which led towards the gallows, and violate the terrible remains of the dead, by cutting a large collop from the culprit's hip. This they brought away, and presented to Brown, who was not a little shocked to find himself so tasked. Nevertheless, getting the dreadful "pound of flesh" roasted after the manner of a beef-steak, and adopting a very strong and drunken resolution, he set himself down to his horrid mess, which, it is said, he actually succeeded in devouring. This story, not being very effectually concealed, was recollected when he afterwards came to the same end with Nicol Muschat. He lived in the Fleshmarket Close, as appears from the evidence on his trial. He made away with his wife by burning her, and said that she had caught fire by accident. But, as the

door was found locked by the neighbours who came on hearing her cries, and he was notorious for abusing her, besides the circumstance of his not appearing to have attempted to extinguish the flames, he was found guilty and executed. He was also hung in chains at the Gallowlee, where Muschat had hung thirty years before. He did not, however, hang long. A

few mornings after having been put up, it was found that he had been taken away during the night. This was supposed to have been done by the butchers of the Edinburgh market, who considered that a general disgrace was thrown upon their fraternity by his ignominious exhibition there. They were said to have thrown his body into the Quarry Holes.

CHAPTER II.

THE case of Katherine Nairne, in 1766, excited, in no small degree, the attention of the Scottish public. This lady was allied, both by blood and marriage, to some highly respectable families. Her crime was the double one of poisoning her husband, and having an intrigue with his brother, who was her associate in the murder. She was brought from the north country into Leith harbour in an open boat, and as fame had preceded her, thousands of people flocked to the shore to see her. She has been described to us as standing erect in the boat, dressed in a riding-habit, and having a switch in her hand, with which she amused herself. Her whole bearing betrayed so much levity, or was so different from what had been expected, that the mob raised a general howl of indignation, and were on the point of stoning her to death, when she was with some difficulty rescued from their hands by the public authorities. In this case the Old Tolbooth found itself, as usual, incapable of retaining a culprit of condition. Sentence had been delayed by the judges, on account of her pregnancy. The mid-wife employed at her accouchement (who, by-the-by, continued to practise in Edinburgh so lately as the year 1805) had the address to achieve a jail-delivery also. For three or four days previous to that concerted for the escape, she pretended to be afflicted

with a prodigious toothache; went out and in with her head enveloped in shawls and flannels; and groaned as if she had been about to give up the ghost. At length, when all the janitory officials were become so habituated to her appearance, as not to heed her "exits and her entrances" very much, Katherine Nairne one evening came down in her stead, with her head wrapped all round with the shawls, uttering the usual groans, and holding down her face upon her hands, as with agony, in the precise way customary with the midwife. The inner door-keeper, not quite unconscious, it is supposed, of the trick, gave her a hearty thump upon the back as she passed out, calling her at the same time a howling old Jezebel and wishing she would never come back to annoy his ears, and those of the other inmates, in such an intolerable way. There are two reports of the proceedings of Katherine Nairne after leaving the prison. One bears that she immediately left the town in a coach, to which she was handed by a friend stationed on purpose. The coachman, it is said, had orders from her relations, in the event of a pursuit, to drive into the sea and drown her—a fate which, however dreadful, was considered preferable to the ignominy of a public execution. The other story runs, that she went up the Lawnmarket to the Castlehill, where lived a respectable

advocate, from whom, as he was her cousin, she expected to receive protection. Being ignorant of the town, she mistook the proper house, and, what was certainly remarkable, applied at that of the crown agent, who was assuredly the last man in the world that could have done her any service. As good luck would have it, she was not recognised by the servant, who civilly directed her to her cousin's house, where it is said she remained concealed many weeks. In addition to these reports, we may mention that we have seen an attic pointed out in St Mary's Wynd, as the place where Katherine Nairne found concealment between the period of her leaving the jail and that of her going abroad. Her future life, it has been reported, was virtuous and fortunate. She was married to a French gentleman, was the mother of a large and respectable family, and died at a good old age. Meanwhile, Patrick Ogilvie, her associate in the dark crime which threw a shade over her younger years, suffered in the Grassmarket. This gentleman, who had been a lieutenant in the —— regiment, was so much beloved by his fellow-soldiers, who happened to be stationed at that time in Edinburgh Castle, that the public authorities judged it necessary to shut them up in that fortress till the execution was over, lest they might have attempted, what they had been heard to threaten, a rescue.

The Old Tolbooth was the scene of the suicide of Mungo Campbell, while under sentence of death for shooting the Earl of Eglintoune. In the country where this memorable event took place, it is somewhat remarkable that the fate of the murderer was more generally lamented than that of the murdered person. Campbell, as we have heard, though what was called "a graceless man," and therefore not much esteemed by the Auld Light people, who there abound, was rather popular in his pro-

fession of exciseman, on account of his rough, honourable spirit, and his lenity in the matter of smuggling. Lord Eglintoune, on the contrary, was not liked, on account of the inconvenience which he occasioned to many of his tenants by newfangled improvements, and his introduction into the country of a generally abhorred article, denominated rye-grass, which, for some reason we are not farmer enough to explain, was fully as unpopular a measure as the bringing in of Prelacy had been a century before. Lord Eglintoune was in the habit of taking strange crotchets about his farms—crotchets quite at variance with the old-established prejudices of his tenantry. He sometimes tried to rouse the old stupid farmers of Kyle from their negligence and supineness, by removing them to other farms, or causing two to exchange their possessions, in order, as he jocularly alleged, to prevent their furniture from getting mouldy, by long standing in particular damp corners. Though his lordship's projects were all undertaken in the spirit of improvement, and though these emigrations were doubtless salutary in a place where the people were then involved in much sloth and nastiness, still they were premature, and carried on with rather a harsh spirit. They therefore excited feelings in the country people not at all favourable to his character. These, joined to the natural eagerness of the common people to exult over the fall of tyranny, and the puritanical spirit of the district, which disposed them to regard his lordship's peccadilloes as downright libertinism, altogether conspired against him, and tended to throw the glory and the pity of the occasion upon his lordship's slayer. Even Mungo's poaching was excused, as a more amiable failing than the excessive love of preserving game, which had always been the unpopular mania of the Eglintoune family. Mungo Campbell was a man respect-

ably connected, the son of a provost of Ayr ; had been a dragoon in his youth, was eccentric in his manner, a bachelor, and was considered at Newmills, where he resided, as an austere and unsocial, but honourable, and not immoral man. There can be no doubt that he rose on his elbows and fired at his lordship, who had additionally provoked him by bursting into a laugh at his awkward fall. The Old Tolbooth was supposed by many, at the time, to have had her usual failing in Mungo's case. The Argyll interest was said to have been employed in his favour, and the body, which was found suspended over the door, instead of being his, was thought to be that of a dead soldier from the castle, substituted in his place. His relations, however, who are very respectable people in Ayrshire, all acknowledge that he died by his own hand ; and this was the general idea of the mob of Edinburgh, who, getting the body into their hands, trailed it down the street to the King's Park, and inspired by different sentiments from those of the Ayrshire people, were not satisfied till they got it up to the top of Salisbury Crags, from which they precipitated it down the "Cat Nick." Aged people in Ayrshire still remember the unwonted brilliancy of the aurora borealis on the midnight of Lord Eglintoune's death. Strange and awful whispers then went through the country, in correspondence, as it were, with the streamers in the sky, which were considered by the superstitious as expressions on the face of heaven of satisfied wrath in the event.

One of the most remarkable criminals ever confined in the Old Tolbooth was the celebrated William Brodie. As may be generally known, this was a man of respectable connexions, and who had moved in good society all his life, unsuspected of any criminal pursuits. It is said that a habit of frequenting cock-pits was the first symptom he

exhibited of a defalcation from virtue. His ingenuity as a joiner gave him a fatal facility in the burglarious pursuits to which he afterwards addicted himself. It was then customary for the shopkeepers of Edinburgh to hang their keys upon a nail at the back of their doors, or at least to take no pains in concealing them during the day. Brodie used to take impressions of them in putty or clay, a piece of which he would carry in the palm of his hand. He kept a blacksmith in his pay, of the name of Smith, who forged exact copies of the keys he wanted, and with these it was his custom to open the shops of his fellow-tradesmen during the night. He thus found opportunities of securely stealing whatsoever he wished to possess. He carried on his malpractices for many years. Upon one shop in particular he made many severe exactions. This was the shop of a company of jewellers, in the North Bridge Street, namely, that at the south-east corner, where it joins the High Street. The unfortunate tradesmen from time to time missed many articles, and paid off one or two faithful shopmen, under the impression of their being guilty of the theft. They were at length ruined. Brodie remained unsuspected, till having committed a daring robbery upon the Excise-office in Chessel's Court, Canon-gate, some circumstances transpired, which induced him to disappear from Edinburgh. Suspicion then becoming strong, he was pursued to Holland, and taken at Amsterdam, standing upright in a press or cupboard. At his trial, Henry Erskine, his counsel, spoke very eloquently in his behalf, representing in particular, to the jury, how strange and improbable a circumstance it was, that a man whom they had themselves known from infancy as a person of good repute, should have been guilty of such practices as those with which he was charged. He was, however, found guilty, and sentenced to

death, along with his accomplice Smith. At the trial he had appeared in a fine full-dress suit of black clothes, the greater part of which was of silk, and his deportment throughout the whole affair was completely that of a gentleman. He continued during the period which intervened between his sentence and execution to dress himself well and to keep up his spirits. A gentleman of our acquaintance, calling upon him in the condemned room, was astonished to find him singing the song from the Beggar's Opera, “ ‘Tis woman seduces all mankind.” Having contrived to cut out the figure of a draught-board on the stone floor of his dungeon, he amused himself by playing with any one who would join him, and, in default of such, with his right hand against his left. This diagram remained in the room where it was so strangely out of place, till the destruction of the jail. His dress and deportment at the gallows were equally gay with those which he assumed at his trial. As the Earl of Morton was the first man executed by the “Maiden,” so was Brodie the first who proved the excellence of an improvement he had formerly made on the apparatus of the gibbet. This was the substitution of what was called the “drop,” for the ancient practice of the double ladder. He inspected the thing with a professional air, and seemed to view the result of his ingenuity with a smile of satisfaction. When placed on that terrible and insecure pedestal, and while the rope was adjusted round his neck by the executioner, his courage did not forsake him. On the contrary, even there, he exhibited a sort of joyful levity, which, though not exactly composure, seemed to the spectators as more indicative of indifference; he shuffled about, looked gaily around, and finally went out of the world with his hand stuck carelessly into the open front of his vest.

The Tolbooth, in its old days, as its

infirmities increased, showed itself now and then incapable of retaining prisoners of very ordinary rank. Within the recollection of many people yet alive, a youth named Reid, the son of an innkeeper in the Grassmarket, while under sentence of death for some felonious act, had the address to make his escape. Every means was resorted to for recovering him, by search throughout the town, vigilance at all the ports, and the offer of a reward for his apprehension, yet he contrived fairly to cheat the gallows. The whole story of his escape is exceedingly curious. He took refuge in the great cylindrical mausoleum of Sir George Mackenzie, in the Greyfriars churchyard of Edinburgh. This place, besides its discomfort, was supposed to be haunted by the ghost of the persecutor—a circumstance of which Reid, an Edinburgh boy, must have been well aware. But he braved all these horrors for the sake of his life. He had been brought up in the Hospital of George Heriot, in the immediate neighbourhood of the churchyard, and had many boyish acquaintances still residing in that munificent establishment. Some of these he contrived to inform of his situation, enjoining them to be secret, and beseeching them to assist him in his distress. The Herioters of those days had a very clannish spirit, insomuch, that to have neglected the interests or safety of any individual of the community, however unworthy he might be of their friendship, would have been looked upon by them as a sin of the deepest dye. Reid's confidants, therefore, considered themselves bound to assist him by all means in their power against that general foe, the public. They kept his secret most faithfully, spared from their own meals as much food as supported him, and ran the risk of severe punishment, as well as of seeing ghosts, by visiting him every night in his horrible abode. They were his only confidants, his very

parents, who lived not far off, being ignorant of his place of concealment. About six weeks after his escape from jail, when the hue and cry had in a great measure subsided, he ventured to leave the tomb, and it was afterwards known that he escaped abroad.

The subsequent history of the Old Tolbooth contains little that is very remarkable. It has passed away with many other venerable relics of the olden time, and we now look in vain for the many antique associations which crowded round the spot it once occupied.

THE LOVER'S LAST VISIT.

BY PROFESSOR WILSON.

THE window of the lonely cottage of Hilltop was beaming far above the highest birchwood, seeming to travellers at a distance in the long valley below, who knew it not, to be a star in the sky. A bright fire was in the kitchen of that small tenement ; the floor was washed, swept and sanded, and not a footstep had marked its perfect neatness ; a small table was covered, near the ingle, with a snow-white cloth, on which was placed a frugal evening meal ; and in happy but pensive mood sat there all alone the woodcutter's only daughter, a comely and gentle creature, if not beautiful—such a one as diffuses pleasure round her 'hay-field, and serenity over the seat in which she sits attentively on the Sabbath, listening to the word of God, or joining with mellow voice in His praise and worship. On this night she expected a visit from her lover, that they might fix their marriage-day ; and her parents, satisfied and happy that their child was about to be wedded to a respectable shepherd, had gone to pay a visit to their nearest neighbour in the glen.

A feeble and hesitating knock was at the door, not like the glad and joyful touch of a lover's hand ; and cautiously opening it, Mary Robinson beheld a female figure wrapped up in a cloak, with her face concealed in a black bonnet. The stranger, whoever she

might be, seemed wearied and worn out, and her feet bore witness to a long day's travel across the marshy mountains. Although she could scarcely help considering her an unwelcome visitor at such an hour, yet Mary had too much disposition—too much humanity,—not to request her to step forward into the hut ; for it seemed as if the wearied woman had lost her way, and had come towards the shining window to be put right upon her journey to the low country.

The stranger took off her bonnet on reaching the fire ; and Mary Robinson beheld the face of one whom, in youth, she had tenderly loved ; although for some years past, the distance at which they lived from each other had kept them from meeting, and only a letter or two, written in their simple way, had given them a few notices of each other's existence. And now Mary had opportunity, in the first speechless gaze of recognition, to mark the altered face of her friend,—and her heart was touched with an ignorant compassion. “ For mercy's sake ! sit down Sarah, and tell me what evil has befallen you ; for you are as white as a ghost. Fear not to confide anything to my bosom : we have herded sheep together on the lonesome braes ;—we have stripped the bark together in the more lonesome woods ;—we have played, laughed, sung,

danced together ;—we have talked merrily and gaily, but innocently enough surely, of sweethearts together ; and, Sarah, graver thoughts, too, have we shared, for when your poor brother died away like a frosted flower, I wept as if I had been his sister ; nor can I ever be so happy in this world as to forget him. Tell me, my friend, why are you here ? and why is your sweet face so ghastly ?”

The heart of this unexpected visitor died within her at these kind and affectionate inquiries ; for she had come on an errand that was likely to dash the joy from that happy countenance. Her heart upbraided her with the meanness of the purpose for which she had paid this visit ; but that was only a passing thought ; for was she, innocent and free from sin, to submit, not only to desertion, but to disgrace, and not trust herself and her wrongs, and her hopes of redress, to her whom she loved as a sister, and whose generous nature, she well knew, not even love, the changer of so many things, could change utterly, though, indeed, it might render it colder than of old to the anguish of a female friend ?

“ Oh ! Mary, I must speak—yet must my words make you grieve, far less for me than for yourself. Wretch that I am, I bring evil tidings into the dwelling of my dearest friend ! These ribbons, they are worn for his sake—they become well, as he thinks, the auburn of your bonny hair ;—that blue gown is worn to-night because he likes it ;—but, Mary, will you curse me to my face, when I declare before the God that made us, that that man is pledged unto me by all that is sacred between mortal creatures ; and that I have here in my bosom written promises and oaths of love from him, who, I was this morning told, is in a few days to be thy husband ? Turn me out of the hut now, if you choose, and let me, if you choose, die of hunger and fatigue in the woods where we have so often walked to-

gether ; for such death would be mercy to me, in comparison with your marriage with him who is mine for ever, if there be a God who heeds the oaths of the creatures He has made.”

Mary Robinson had led a happy life, but a life of quiet thoughts, tranquil hopes, and meek desires. Tenderly and truly did she love the man to whom she was now betrothed ; but it was because she had thought him gentle, manly, upright, sincere, and one that feared God. His character was unimpeached—to her his behaviour had always been fond, affectionate, and respectful ; that he was a fine-looking man, and could show himself among the best of the country round at church, and market, and fair-day, she saw and felt with pleasure and with pride. But in the heart of this poor, humble, contented, and pious girl, love was not a violent passion, but an affection sweet and profound. She looked forward to her marriage with a joyful sedateness, knowing that she would have to toil for her family, if blest with children ; but happy in the thought of keeping her husband’s house clean, of preparing his frugal meals, and welcoming him when wearied at night to her faithful, and affectionate, and grateful bosom.

At first, perhaps, a slight flush of anger towards Sarah tinged her cheek ; then followed in quick succession, or all blended together in one sickening pang, fear, disappointment, the sense of wrong, and the cruel pain of disesteeming and despising one on whom her heart had rested with all its best and purest affections. But though there was a keen struggle between many feelings in her heart, her resolution was formed during that very conflict, and she said within herself, “ If it be even so, neither will I be so unjust as to deprive poor Sarah of the man who ought to marry her, nor will I be so mean and low-spirited, poor as I am, and dear as he has been unto me, as to become his wife.”

While these thoughts were calmly passing in the soul of this magnanimous girl, all her former affection for Sarah revived ; and, as she sighed for herself, she wept aloud for her friend. "Be quiet, be quiet, Sarah, and sob not so as if your heart were breaking. It need not be thus with you. Oh, sob not so sair ! You surely have not walked in this one day from the heart of the parish of Montrath ?"—"I have indeed done so, and I am as weak as the wreathed snaw. God knows, little matter if I should die away ; for, after all, I fear he will never think of me for his wife, and you, Mary, will lose a husband with whom you would have been happy, I feel, after all, that I must appear a mean wretch in your eyes."

There was silence between them ; and Mary Robinson, looking at the clock, saw that it wanted only about a quarter of an hour from the time of tryst. "Give me the oaths and promises you mentioned, out of your bosom, Sarah, that I may show them to Gabriel when he comes. And once more I promise, by all the sunny and all the snowy days we have sat together in the same plaid on the hillside, or in the lonesome charcoal plots and nests o' green in the woods, that if my Gabriel—did I say my Gabriel?—has forsaken you and deceived me thus, never shall his lips touch mine again—never shall he put ring on my finger—never shall this head lie in his bosom—no, never, never ; notwithstanding all the happy, too happy, hours and days I have been with him, near or at a distance—on the corn-rig—among the meadow hay, in the singing-school—at harvest-home—in this room, and in God's own house. So help me God, but I will keep this vow !"

Poor Sarah told, in a few hurried words, the story of her love and desertion—how Gabriel, whose business as a shepherd often took him into Montrath parish, had wooed her, and fixed everything about their marriage, nearly

a year ago. But that he had become causelessly jealous of a young man whom she scarcely knew ; had accused her of want of virtue, and for many months had never once come to see her. "This morning, for the first time, I heard for a certainty, from one who knew Gabriel well and all his concerns, that the banns had been proclaimed in the church between him and you ; and that in a day or two you were to be married. And though I felt drowning, I determined to make a struggle for my life—for oh ! Mary, Mary, my heart is not like your heart ; it wants your wisdom, your meekness, your piety ; and if I am to lose Gabriel, will I destroy my miserable life, and face the wrath of God sitting in judgment upon sinners."

At this burst of passion Sarah hid her face with her hands, as if sensible that she had committed blasphemy. Mary, seeing her wearied, hungry, thirsty, and feverish, spoke to her in the most soothing manner, led her into the little parlour called the spence, then removed into it the table, with the oatmeal cakes, butter, and milk ; and telling her to take some refreshment, and then lie down in the bed, but on no account to leave the room till called for, gave her a sisterly kiss, and left her. In a few minutes the outer door opened, and Gabriel entered.

The lover said, "How is my sweet Mary?" with a beaming countenance ; and gently drawing her to his bosom, he kissed her cheek. Mary did not—could not—wished not—at once to release herself from his enfolding arms. Gabriel had always treated her as the woman who was to be his wife ; and though, at this time, her heart knew its own bitterness, yet she repelled not endearments that were so lately delightful, and suffered him to take her almost in his arms to their accustomed seat. He held her hand in his, and began to speak in his usual kind and affectionate lan-

guage. Kind and affectionate it was, for though he ought not to have done so, he loved her, as he thought, better than his life. Her heart could not, in one small short hour, forget a whole year of bliss. She could not yet fling away with her own hand what, only a few minutes ago, seemed to her the hope of paradise. Her soul sickened within her, and she wished that she were dead, or never had been born.

"O Gabriel ! Gabriel ! well indeed have I loved you ; nor will I say, after all that has passed between us, that you are not deserving, after all, of a better love than mine. Vain were it to deny my love, either to you or to my own soul. But look me in the face—be not wrathful—think not to hide the truth either from yourself or me, for that now is impossible—but tell me solemnly, as you shall answer to God at the judgment-day, if you know any reason why I must not be your wedded wife." She kept her mild moist eyes fixed upon him ; but he hung down his head and uttered not a word, for he was guilty before her, before his own soul, and before God.

"Gabriel, never could we have been happy ; for you often, often told me, that all the secrets of your heart were known unto me, yet never did you tell me this. How could you desert the poor innocent creature that loved you ; and how could you use me so, who loved you perhaps as well as she, but whose heart God will teach, not to forget you, for that may I never do, but to think on you with that friendship and affection which innocently I can bestow upon you, when you are Sarah's husband. For, Gabriel, I have this night sworn, not in anger or passion—no, no—but in sorrow and pity for another's wrongs—in sorrow also, deny it will I not, for my own—to look on you from this hour, as on one whose life is to be led apart from my life, and whose love must never more meet with my love. Speak not unto

me—look not on me with beseeching eyes. Duty and religion forbid us ever to be man and wife. But you know there is one, besides me, whom you loved before you loved me, and, therefore, it may be better too ; and that she loves you, and is faithful, as if God had made you one, I say without fear—I who have known her since she was a child, although, fatally for the peace of us both, we have long lived apart. Sarah is in the house ; I will bring her unto you in tears, but not tears of penitence, for she is as innocent of that sin as I am, who now speak."

Mary went into the little parlour, and led Sarah forward in her hand. Despairing as she had been, yet when she had heard from poor Mary's voice speaking so fervently, that Gabriel had come, and that her friend was interceding in her behalf, the poor girl had arranged her hair in a small looking-glass—tied it up with a ribbon which Gabriel had given her, and put into the breast of her gown a little gilt brooch, that contained locks of their blended hair. Pale but beautiful—for Sarah Pringle was the fairest girl in all the country—she advanced with a flush on that paleness of reviving hope, injured pride, and love that was ready to forgive all and forget all, so that once again she could be restored to the place in his heart that she had lost. "What have I ever done, Gabriel, that you should fling me from you ? May my soul never live by the atonement of my Saviour, if I am not innocent of that sin, yea, of all distant thought of that sin, with which you, even you, have in your hard-heartedness charged me. Look me in the face, Gabriel, and think of all I have been unto you, and if you say that before God, and in your own soul, you believe me guilty, then will I go away out into the dark night, and, long before morning, my troubles will be at an end."

Truth was not only in her fervent and

simple words, but in the tone of her voice, the colour of her face, and the light of her eyes. Gabriel had long shut up his heart against her. At first, he had doubted her virtue, and that doubt gradually weakened his affection. At last he tried to believe her guilty, or to forget her altogether, when his heart turned to Mary Robinson, and he thought of making her his wife. His injustice—his wickedness—his baseness—which he had so long concealed, in some measure, from himself, by a dim feeling of wrong done him, and afterwards by the pleasure of a new love, now appeared to him as they were, and without disguise. Mary took Sarah's hand and placed it within that of her contrite lover; for had the tumult of conflicting passions allowed him to know his own soul, such at that moment he surely was, saying with a voice as composed as the eyes with which she looked upon them, “I restore you to each other; and I already feel the comfort of being able to do my duty. I will be bride’s-maid. And I now implore the blessing of God upon your marriage. Gabriel, your betrothed will sleep this night in my bosom. We

will think of you, better, perhaps, than you deserve. It is not for me to tell you what you have to repent of. Let us all three pray for each other this night, and evermore, when we are on our knees before our Maker. The old people will soon be at home. Good-night, Gabriel.” He kissed Sarah; and, giving Mary a look of shame, humility, and reverence, he went home to meditation and repentance.

It was now midsummer; and before the harvest had been gathered in throughout the higher valleys, or the sheep brought from the mountain-fold, Gabriel and Sarah were man and wife. Time passed on, and a blooming family cheered their board and fireside. Nor did Mary Robinson, the Flower of the Forest (for so the woodcutter’s daughter was often called), pass her life in single blessedness. She, too, became a wife and mother; and the two families, who lived at last on adjacent farms, were remarkable for mutual affection throughout all the parish; and more than one intermarriage took place between them, at a time when the worthy parents had almost forgotten the trying incident of their youth.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS AND CHATELAR;

OR, TWILIGHT MUSINGS IN HOLYROOD.

THERE are no mysteries into which we are so fond of prying as the mysteries of the heart. The hero of the best novel in the world, if he could not descend to fall in love, might march through his three volumes and excite no more sensation than his grandmother; and a newspaper without a breach of promise of marriage is a thing not to be endured.

It is not my intention to affect any singular exception from this natural propensity, and I am ready to confess

that the next best thing to being in love oneself, is to speculate on the hopes, and fears, and fates of others. How truly interesting are the little schemes and subterfuges, the romancing and story-telling of our dove-eyed and gentle-hearted playfellows! I have listened to a lame excuse for a stolen ride in a tilbury, or a duet in the woods, with wonderful sensibility; and have witnessed the ceremony of cross-questioning with as much trepidation as I could have felt had I been the

culprit myself. It is not, however, to be maintained that the love adventures of the present age can, in any way, compete with the enchantment of days gone ; when tender souls were won by tough exploits, and Cupid's dart was a twenty-foot lance, ordained only to reach the lady's heart through the ribs of the rival. This was the golden age of love, albeit I am not one to lament it, thinking, as I do, that it is far more sensible to aid and abet my neighbour in toasting the beauty of his mistress, than to caper about with him in the lists, for contradiction's sake, to the imminent danger and discomfort of us both. After this came the middle or dark ages of love, when it had ceased to be a glory, but had lost nothing of its fervour as a passion. If there is here less of romance than in the tilting days, there is considerably more of interest, because there is more of mystery. In the one, the test of true love was to make boast, in the other it was to keep secret. Accordingly, for an immense space of time, we have nothing but such fragments of adventures as could be gathered by eavesdroppers, who leave us to put head and tail to them as best suits our fancy ; and the loves of Queen Elizabeth, who lived, as it were, only yesterday, are less known than the loves of queen Genevra, who perhaps never lived at all.

These amatory reflections occurred to me some little time ago, during a twilight reverie in the long, gloomy banqueting-room of Holyrood. It was the very land of love and mystery, for there was scarcely one of the grim visages which glared upon the walls, but had obtained his share of celebrity in lady's bower, as well as in tented field ; and of scarcely one of whom any certain and defined adventures have been handed down. I continued speculating through this line of kings, blessing the mark and confounding the painter, who has given us so little of their history in their

faces, till I grew quite warm upon the subject, and found myself uniting and reasoning upon the few facts of which we are in possession, till I fancied I could penetrate through two or three centuries at least, and had a pretty shrewd idea as to who and who had been together.

Scotland has, I think, in spite of its sober, money-making character, always excited a more romantic curiosity than England. This, perhaps, is more owing to its peculiar misfortunes than to any particular difference of disposition. English heroes have been as brave, and no doubt as loving, but they do not walk under such a halo of pity ; and whilst we pry with eagerness into the secrets of the gallant Jameses, we suffer those of their English contemporaries to be "interred with their bones." I have always felt this strongly, and at the time of which I speak, I felt it stronger than ever. I was treading upon the very boards which had bounded to their manly steps, and was surrounded by the very walls which possessed the secret whisperings of their hearts. From that identical window, perhaps, had the first James gazed upon the moon, which I saw rising, and fancied that he almost held commune with the eyes of his English beauty. There, perhaps, had the royal poet entwined her name with the choicest hopes of his bosom, and woven a tale of happiness which concealed but too securely the assassin and the dagger behind it. There, too, might the courteous and courageous victims of Flodden Field and Solway Moss have planned the loves which characterised their lives, and the wars which concluded them, almost at the same moment. And there might the hapless Mary have first listened to the poisonous passion of a Darnley, or a Bothwell, and afterwards shed the tears of bitterness and self-reproach.

I paced this sad-looking room of

rejoicing quite unconscious of the hours that were passing ; for I was alone, and in a train of thought which nothing but a hearty shake could have interrupted. Mary, and all her beauty, and talents, and acquirements, continued floating before me. Her world of lovers and admirers, who, for the most part, were sleeping in a bloody bed, seemed rising one by one to my view, and I wandered with them through their hopes, and their fears, and their sorrows, even to the scaffold, as though I had been the ghost of one of them myself, and were possessed of secrets of which there is no living record.

Many of these ill-fated hearts have, by their nobility, or their exploits, or by the caprice of historians, received full meed of applause and pity ; many, no doubt, have sunk into oblivion ; and some, in addition to their misfortunes, have left their memories to combat with the censure which has been thought due to their presumption ;—of these last I have always considered the unfortunate Chatelar to have been the most hardly used, and in the course of my musings I endeavoured to puzzle out something satisfactory to myself upon his dark and distorted history.

The birth of Chatelar, if not noble, was in no common degree honourable, for he was great-nephew to the celebrated Bayard, *le Chevalier sans peur et sans tache*. It is said that he likewise bore a strong resemblance to him in person, possessing a handsome face and graceful figure ; and equally in manly and elegant acquirements, being an expert soldier and an accomplished courtier. In addition to this, says Brantome, who knew him personally, he possessed a most elegant mind, and spoke and wrote, both in prose and poetry, as well as any man in France.

Dangerous indeed are these advantages ; and Chatelar's first meeting with Mary was under circumstances calculated to render them doubly danger-

ous. Alone, as she conceived herself, cast off from the dearest ties of her heart, the land which she had learnt to consider her native land fading fast from her eyes, and the billows bearing her to the banishment of one with which, as it contained none that she loved, she could feel no sympathy ;—in this scene of wailing and tears, the first tones of the poet were stealing upon her ear with the spirit of kindred feelings and kindred pursuits. We are to consider that Mary at this time had obtained but little experience, and was probably not overstocked with prudence, having scarcely attained the age of nineteen years. Not only, are we told, did she listen with complacency and pleasure to Chatelar's warm and romantic praises of her beauty, but employed her poetic talent in approving and replying to them ; putting herself upon a level with her gifted companion, a course which was morally certain to convert his veneration into feelings more nearly allied to his nature. Had he not been blamed for his presumption, it is probable that he would have been condemned for his stoicism ; and his luckless passion is by no means a singular proof that where hearts are cast in kindred moulds, it is difficult to recognise extrinsic disparities. Chatelar saw the woman, and forgot the queen ; Mary felt the satisfaction, and was blind to the consequences.

It is much to be lamented by the lovers of truth, that none of the poetical pieces which are said to have passed between Mary and Chatelar have been handed down to us. One song would have been a more valuable document in the elucidation of their history than all the annals we possess, and would have taught us at once the degree of encouragement and intimacy which was permitted. Whatever it was, it was such as to rivet the chains which had been so readily and unadvisedly put on ; and from the period of their first meeting, we

may consider him the most enthusiastic of her lovers.

How long he continued the admiration and the favourite of Holyrood does not, I believe, appear. It could not, however, be any considerable time ere he was compelled to return with his friend and patron, Damville, to France, with full reason to lament his voyage to Scotland, and with, probably, a firm determination to revisit it whenever opportunity should permit. This opportunity his evil stars were not long in bringing about. The projected war of faith between Damville's party and the Huguenots afforded him a fair pretext for soliciting a dispensation of his services. Of the first he was a servant, of the last he was a disciple. It was therefore contrary to his honour and inclinations to fight against either of them, and, accordingly, in about fifteen months, we find him again at Holyrood.

Mary, it may reasonably be inferred, from her extreme love of France, and unwillingness to leave it, was not very speedily to be reconciled to her change of scene and society ; a face, therefore, from the adopted land of her affections, and a tongue capable of gratifying them with the minutest accounts of the beloved objects it contained, must, at this time, have been acquisitions of no small interest. Chatelar, too, had already worked a welcome on his own account.

Few of my readers need be reminded how insensibly and certainly the tongue which speaks of that which is dear to our hearts is stored up with it in the same treasury. The tale and the teller of it,—the leaf and the wave it falls upon,—arrive at the same time at the same destination. Histories, for the most part, insinuate that Mary's carriage towards Chatelar was merely that of kindness and courtesy ; but this, I think, is an inference not warranted by the various facts which they have been unable to repress, and not even the silence

of the inveterate John Knox upon this head can convince me that Chatelar had not reason to believe himself beloved.

Let us then imagine, if we can, what was likely to be the intoxication produced in the brain as well as the bosom of a man of an enthusiastic temperament by a free and daily intercourse, during three months, with the fascinations of a creature like Mary. What tales could that old misshapen boudoir—famous only, in common estimation, for the murder of Rizzio and the boot of Darnley—tell of smiles and tears over the fortunes of dear and distant companions of childhood, as narrated by the voice of one to whom, perhaps, they were equally dear ! What tales could it tell of mingling music, and mingling poetry, and mingling looks, and vain regrets, and fearful anticipations ! Here had the day been passed in listening to the praises of each other, from lips in which praise was a talent and a profession ; and here had the twilight stolen upon them when none were by, and none could know how deeply the truth of those praises was acknowledged. Let us imagine all this, and, likewise, how Chatelar was likely to be wrought upon by the utter hopelessness of his case.

Had the object of his passion been upon anything like a level with him,—had there been the most remote possibility of a chance of its attainment,—his subsequent conduct would, most likely, not have been such as to render it a subject for investigation. But Mary must have been as inaccessible to him as the being of another world. The devotion which he felt for her was looked upon by the heads of her court as a species of sacrilege ; and he was given to believe, that each had a plan for undermining his happiness and removing him from her favour. If this could not be effected, it was a moral certainty that Mary, in the bloom of her youth and the plentitude of her power, must be

come to some one of her numerous suitors all which it was impossible that she could ever become to him. Of these two cases, perhaps, the one was as bad as the other, and Chatelar was impelled to an act of desperation, which, in these matter-of-fact days, can scarcely be conceived. On the night of the 12th of February, 1563, he was found concealed in the young queen's bed-chamber.

It would, I fear, be a difficult undertaking, in the eyes of dispassionate and reasoning persons, to throw a charitable doubt upon the motives of this unseasonable intrusion. The fair and obvious inference is, that he depended upon the impression he had made upon Mary's heart, and the impossibility of their lawful union. In some degree, too, he might have been influenced by the perilous consequences of a discovery, to which he possibly thought her love would not permit her to expose him. The propriety of this argument, if he made use of it, was not put to the test, for his discovery fell to the lot of Mary's female attendants before she retired.

There is, however, another class of readers who will give him credit for other thoughts. I mean those best of all possible judges of love-affairs, in whom the commonplaces of life have not entirely destroyed that kindly feeling of romance which Nature thought it necessary to implant in them, and which the usage of modern days renders it necessary for them to be ashamed of. The readers of whom I speak will decide more from the heart than the head ; and then what an interminable field of defence is laid open ! What strange feelings and unaccountable exploits might be furnished from the catalogue of love vagaries ! Were Chatelar to be judged by other examples, the simple circumstance of his secreting himself for the niente purpose of being in the hallowed neighbourhood of his mistress, and without the most distant idea of making her acquainted

with it, would appear a very commonplace and very pardonable occurrence. And if we keep in mind his poetical character and chivalrous education, this belief is materially strengthened.

On the following morning the affair was made known to the Queen by her ladies. Had they been wise enough to hold their peace, it is odds but the lover's taste for adventure would have been satisfied by the first essay. Instead of this, being forbidden all future access to her presence, he became more desperate than ever. His motives had been misconstrued ; his actions, he thought, had been misrepresented ; he was bent on explanation, and he hoped for pardon. Thus it was that when Mary, on the same day, quitted Edinburgh, her disgraced admirer executed his determination of following her, and, on the night of the 14th, seized the only opportunity of an interview by committing the very same offence for which he was then suffering : Mary had no sooner entered her chamber than Chatelar stood before her.

Whatever her feelings may have been towards him, it is not surprising that this sudden apparition should have proved somewhat startling, and have produced an agitation not very favourable to his cause. It may be presumed that she was not mistress of her actions, for certain it is, that she did that which, if she possessed one half of the womanly tenderness for which she has credit, must have been a blight and a bitterness upon her after life. Chatelar comes, wounded to the quick, to supplicate a hearing, and the Queen, it is said, "was fain to cry for help," and desire Murray, who came at her call, to "put his dagger into him."

Thus, by dint of unnecessary terrors and unmeaning words, was Chatelar given over to an enemy who had always kept a jealous eye upon him, and to justice, which seemed determined to strain a point for his sake, and give him

something more than his due. In a few days he was tried, and experienced the usual fate of favourites by being condemned to death.

Alas ! how bitter is the recollection of even trifling injuries towards those who loved and are lost to us ! Yet what had this been in counterpoise to the reflections of Mary ? She had given over a fond and a fervent heart to death for no fault but too much love, and any attempt to recall the deed might have afforded a colour to the aspersions which malignant persons were ever ready to cast upon her character, but could have availed no further.

For Chatelar there was little leisure for reflection. The fever of the first surprise,—the strange, the appalling conviction as to the hand which hurled him to his fate,—the shame, the humiliation, the indignation, had scarce time to cool in his forfeit blood, before he was brought out to die the death of a culprit upon the scaffold.

It has been the fashion for writers upon this subject, in the quiet and safety of their firesides, to exclaim against his want of preparation for his transit ; but, under such circumstances, I cannot much wonder that he should rather rebel against the usual ceremonies of psalm-singing and last speeches. If he chose to nerve himself for death by reading Ronsard's hymn upon it, it is no proof that he looked with irreverence upon what was to follow it. His last words are extremely touching ; for they prove that, though he considered that Mary had remorselessly sacrificed his life, his sorrow was greater than his resentment, and his love went with him to the grave. "Adieu," he said, turning to the quarter in which he supposed her to be, "adieu, most beautiful and most cruel princess in the world !" and then submitting himself to the executioner, he met the last stroke with a courage consistent with his character.

Of Mary's behaviour on this event, history, I believe, gives no account.

My ponderings upon this singular story had detained me long. The old pictures on the walls glistened and glimmered in the moonshine like a band of spectres ; and, at last, I fairly fancied that I saw one grisly gentleman pointing at me with his truncheon, in the act of directing his Furies to "seize on me and take me to their torments." It was almost time to be gone, but the thought of Chatelar seemed holding me by the skirts. I could not depart without taking another look at the scene of his happiest hours, and I stole, shadow-like, with as little noise as I could, through the narrow passages and staircases, till I stood in Mary's little private apartment. As I passed the antechamber, the light was shining only on the stain of blood ; the black shadows here and elsewhere made the walls appear as though they had been hung with mourning. I do not know that ever I felt so melancholy ; and had not the owl just then given a most dismal whoop, there is no telling but that I might have had courage and sentiment enough to have stayed until I had been locked up for the night. I passed by the low bed, under which Chatelar is said to have hidden himself. It must have cost him some trouble to get there ! I glanced hastily at the faded tambour work, which, it is possible, he might have witnessed in its progress ; and I shook my head with much satisfaction to think that I had a head to shake. "If," said I, "there is more interest attached to the old times of love, it is, after all, in some degree, counterbalanced by the safety of the present ; and I know not whether it is not better to be born in the age when racks and torments are used metaphorically, than in those in which it is an even chance that I might have encountered the reality."—*Literary Souvenir, 1825.*

A NIGHT IN DUNCAN M'GOWAN'S.

AFTER traversing a bleak and barren track of moorland country, I unexpectedly arrived at the village of Warlockheugh, a few hours before the sun had set upon the cheerless and level horizon of that desolate region. A scene so bleak and solitary had engendered a vague and melancholy feeling of individual helplessness and desertion; the morning buoyancy of my spirits had settled down into dull and dejected sympathy with the exhausted members of my body; the sharp, clear air that blew across the moor had whetted my appetite to an exquisite degree of keenness, so that I was not a little disposed to mingle once more with human society, to invigorate my limbs with another night's repose, and to satisfy the cravings of hunger with some necessary refreshment. I therefore entered the village at a quicker pace than I had exerted for the last ten or twelve miles of my journey.

It is situated in a narrow valley, which slopes away from the moorland side, and is surrounded by a ridge of rocks that rise around it like an iron barrier, and frown defiance to the threatened encroachments of the ocean. A dark brown stream floats along the moor with a lazy and silent current, bursts with a single leap over a precipice at the upper end of the village, thunders along a broken, rocky channel, and spouts a roaring cataract, sheer down through the rifted chasm that opens towards the coast, and affords the villagers a view of ocean, which, environed on all sides by tumultuous ranges of rugged mountains, expands its sheet of blue waters like an inland lake.

Having entered the village of Warlockheugh, I was attracted by the Red Lion that blazes on the sign of Duncan M'Gowan, who kept then, and, as I

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understand, still keeps, "excellent entertainment for men and horses." I was shown into Duncan's best apartment, but had little leisure and no inclination to make an inventory of its contents. Hunger is an urgent creditor, and not to be reasoned with, so I ordered the landlord to fetch me some refreshment. My order was immediately succeeded by a most delightful concert of culinary implements, whose rasp and clank, and clatter, and jingle, mingling harmoniously with the squirt and buzz of a frying-pan, engendered a hearty and haggis-like hodge-podge of substantial and delectable associations. The table was soon covered with that plain and solid sort of food which is generally to be found in the temporary halting places of such wayfaring men as coach-drivers and carriers, who are no mean connoisseurs in the more rational part of good living. Having done ample justice to the landlord's good cheer, I laid myself back in my chair, in that state of agreeable languor which generally succeeds sudden rest after violent exertion, and abundant refreshment after long fasting. My imagination, struggling between the benumbing influence of sated appetite, and the exhilarating novelty of my present situation, floated dimly and drowsily over the various occurrences of life, till the iris-coloured texture of existence saddened into a gray heaviness of eye, whose twilight vision grew darker and darker, till the ill-defined line of connexion, with which consciousness divided the waking from the slumbering world, was swallowed up in the blackness of a profound sleep. And there, as we may suppose, I sat twanging, through the trumpet of my nose, my own lullaby, and rivalling the sonorous drone of M'Glashan the piper's bagpipe, who, when I came in, was sitting on a stone

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at the door, piping his diabolical music to the happy villagers.

I had not long remained in this "pleasing land of drowsyhead," when my slumbers were violently broken by a tumultuous uproar coming down from the upper end of the village. I started from my seat in that state of giddiness and stupor which one generally feels when roused from sleep by violent and alarming sounds. My whole frame was benumbed by the uneasiness of my dozing position, and it was with the utmost pain and difficulty I could prevail upon my limbs to carry me to the window, to ascertain the cause of the uproarious din, which every moment grew louder and louder. The first objects that caught my attention were some straggling villagers, sweeping down the lane with desperate speed of foot, and dismal looks of consternation. I made towards the door, but the passage was choked full of alarmed and breathless fugitives, whose apprehensions had driven them to the first asylum which opportunity presented. Ejaculations and exclamations of all sorts were gasped forth by the multitude in the passage. Some swore in wrath, some laughed in self-congratulation, while others clamorously bewailed those of their kindred who might yet be exposed to the approaching danger. I inquired at a composed-looking middle-aged personage who stood beside me, the cause of this uncommon and alarming occurrence. "Ou," said he, coolly, "M'Harrigle's bull's run wud, and he's gaun to take the command o' the town till we get a new magistrate; for, as ye maun understand, sir, Bailie Brodie died yesterday." The inhabitants rushed by in greater numbers, the sounds grew numerous, louder and more intelligible, as the huddling multitude approached; and I distinctly heard several voices bawling out, "Rin, ye deevil, or ye'll be torn to 'coupins!—Lord preserve us! he'll be ower the

brae face—there he goes—confound ye! rin—mercy on us! sic a race!" The uproar and clamour, already run into utter confusion, turned fiercer and more riotous as a knot of people flew suddenly past the window, and left a space behind them that was immediately occupied by the bull, tumbling his huge unwieldy carcass down the lane, followed by an immense crowd of men, women, and children, and curs of every denomination. The hoarse bawling of the men, the screams of the women, and the clear treble of the children, the barking of curs, from the gruff big bow-wow of the mastiff down to the nyiff-nyaff and yelp-yelp of the terrier, along with the boobaloo and bellow of the bull, formed a wild and savage uproar that was truly deafening. I dashed up the window and looked out. The enraged animal lumbered along, and heaved his ponderous bulk into fantastical attitudes, with his posterior appendage projecting straight out like a pole and tassel, his back raised, and his head ploughing on between his fore-feet. He hobbled, and hurled, and tumbled along with as blind an impulse as if he had been a mass of destructive machinery driven headlong by the mad impetus of some terrible and ungovernable energy. Away he went. The last sight I saw of him was as he entangled his horns in a thick stunted bush that grew on the top of a bank at some distance. The bush withstood the violence of his shock, and he tumbled with his feet uppermost. He struggled for a few moments; at length succeeded in tearing it out by the roots, vanished over the precipice, and went bellowing down the waterfall, amidst the shouts of the multitude who pursued him.

A group of people, very closely wedged together, moved slowly up the village. They were carrying some individual who had suffered from the fury of the enraged animal. They shouldered on towards M'Gowan's in mournful pro-

cession. All seemed extremely anxious to obtain a look of the unhappy sufferer. Those who were near pressed more closely towards the centre of the crowd, while those on the outside, excited by sympathetic curiosity, were leaping up round about, asking all the while the name of the person, and inquiring what injury he had sustained. "He's no sair hurt, I hope," said one. "Is he dead?" said another of livelier apprehensions and quicker sensibility. "It's auld Simon Gray," said a young man, who came running up out of breath to M'Gowan's door. "Simon Gray's dead!" "Simon Gray dead!" cried M'Gowan; "God forbid!" So saying, out at the door he rushed to ascertain the truth of the mournful intelligence. "Wae's me," said Dame M'Gowan, "but this is a sair heart to us a'" as she sank down in a chair, and cried for water to her only daughter, who stood sorrowfully beside her mother, alternately wringing her hands and plaiting the hem of her white muslin apron over her finger in mute affliction.

Simon Gray the dominie was brought into M'Gowan's. He was bleeding at the nose and mouth, but did not appear to have received any very serious injury. Cold water was dashed on his face, his temples were bathed with vinegar, and the occasional opening and shutting of the eye, accompanied with a laboured heaving of the breast, gave evidence that the dominie was not yet destined to be gathered to his fathers. The inquiries of the multitude round the door were numerous, frequent, and affectionate. The children were loud and clamorous in their grief, all except one little white-headed, heavy-browed, sun-burned vagabond, who, looking over the shoulder of a neighbour urchin, asked if there would be "ony schulin' the morn;" and upon an answer being sobbed out in the negative, the roguish truant sought the nearest

passage out of the crowd, and ran up the lane whistling "Ower the water to Charlie," till his career of unseasonable mirth was checked by a stout lad, an old student of Simon's, who was running without hat and coat to inquire the fate of his beloved preceptor, and who, when he witnessed the boy's heartlessness, could not help lending him a box on the ear, which effectually converted his shrill whistle of delight into a monotonous grumble, accompanied by the common exclamation of wonderment, "What's that for, ye muckle brute?" and a half hesitating stooping for a stone, which the lad who bowed on towards M'Gowan's took no notice of till the messenger of the boy's indignation lighted at his heels, and bounded on the road before him.

By the affectionate attention of his friends Simon was soon able to speak to those around him, but still felt so weak that he requested to be put to bed. His revival was no sooner announced at the door of the inn than a loud and tumultuous burst of enthusiastic feeling ran through the crowd, which immediately dispersed amidst clapping of hands, loud laughs, and hearty jokes.

The landlord, after ministering to the necessities of the dominie, came into the apartment where I was sitting. "Surely, landlord," said I, "this old man Simon Gray is a great favourite among you."

"Troth, sir, it's nae wonder," was the reply to my observation. "He has gien the villagers of Warlockheugh their Lear, and keepit them lauchin', for five-and-twenty years back. He's a gude-hearted carle too; he downa see a puir body in want, and rather than let the bairns grow up in idleness and ignorance, he'll gie them their Lear for naething. A'body's fond o' Simon, and the lasses especially, though he ne'er maks love to ane o' them. They say some flirt o' a lady disappointed

him when he was at the college, and he vowed ne'er to mak love to anither. But I daur say there's some o' our lasses vain eneugh to think they'll be able to gar him brak his promise. It'll no do,—he's ower auld a cat to draw a strae afore.

"He's a real auld bachelor in his way of leevin'. He maks and mends his ain claes too, clouts his ain shoon, darns his ain stockings, and keeps a lot o' tools for a' crafts. His kitchen's a no-that-ill-red-up place; but if ye saw his study, sir, as he ca'st, it's the queerest, higgledy-piggledy, odds-and-ends sort o' place ye ever saw in your life. It's eneugh to turn your brain just to look intil't. His pianoforte and his tables a' covered wi' a confused heap o' books, writings, musical instruments, colours, oil-paintings, and loose fragments o' rough designs, made wi' black and white caulk on a nankeen-coloured kind o' paper. The wa' is stuck fu' o' brass-headed nails that he hings his follies and his nonsense on. He has a muckle ill-faured image yonder, that he ca's an Indian god, standing on his mantelpiece, wi' lang teeth made o' fish-banes, and twa round bits o' white airn, with big black-headed tackets driven through the middle o' them for een, and a queer crown on its head, made o' split quills, plait strae, and peacocks' feathers. It's eneugh to gar a body a' grue just to look at it. He has bears' and teegers' heads girnin' on the wa', and slouched hats, swords, dirks, and rusty rapiers o' every kind. He has twa or three things yonder that he ca's Roman helmets (though the maist o' folk would reckon them nae ither than barbers' basins), forby some imitations o' auld coats o' mail, made o' painted pasteboard. Na, faith, the deil hae me," continued Duncan, laughing at the whimsical character of the place he was describing, "if I dinna whiles think the body's out o' his wits. But he canna be that, either, for they're great

folks ca'ing upon him, baith far and near, and he cracks to them whiles in strange tongues, that nane in the kintra-side kens but himsel and the minister. Na, troth, sir, they say that our Mess John, wha's no a lame hand himsel, is just a bairn to him. 'Od he's a droll, ready-handed body. He maks a'thing himsel. He has some orra time on his hand, ye see; and he's either crooning ower some auld Scotch songs, or fiddling some outlandish tunes; and, my faith! he can twine them out frae the grist o' a common strae-rape to the fineness o' a windle-strae. He shakes and dirls sae wonderfully too, that ye wad think his fiddle's no a thing o' timmer and catgut at a', but some droll musical creature o' flesh and blood. Eh, my certie! it gars a body's bowels a' tremble wi' gladness whiles to hear him. He'll come in here at an antrin time, ca' for his gill o' gin, and no a living creature wi' him, and sit ower't for twa or three hours, crackin' to himsel, and laughin' as loudly and heartily at his ain queer stories, as if he had a dozen o' merry cronies at his elbow. He ne'er forgets when he's takin' his drams to wish himsel weel; for at every sip, he says, 'Here's to ye, Simon—thanks to ye, Mr Gray;' and so on he goes the whole night, as if he were a kind of a twa-auld body. Ae night when he sat in my back-room and loosed his budget of jokes, and laughed and roared wi' himself for twa hours, I laid my lug to the key-hole o' the door, and overheard the following dialogue."

At this part of mine host's narrative the rattling of a wheeled vehicle was heard, and ceased immediately upon reaching the door of the inn. Mr Cleekum, the village lawyer, had come in a few minutes before, and was sitting beside us, laughing at M'Gowan's narrative, of the latter part of which he also had been an auditory witness. M'Gowan's loquacity ceased when he heard the vehicle at the door; he looked out at the window,

turned round to me, and said hastily, “ Maister Cleekum ’ll tell ye a’ about it, sir,—he heard it as weel as me.—Excuse me, there’s a gig at the door. We maun mind our ain shop, ye ken, and a rider’s penny’s worth a gangrel’s groat ony day.”

So saying, he hurried out, leaving the lawyer to gratify my curiosity by the sequel of the dominie’s solitary dialogue.

“ M’Gowan’s description, sir, of this eccentric being is by no means exaggerated,” said Mr Cleekum ; “ and if it can afford you any amusement, I shall relate the remainder of Mr Gray’s dialogue, which I am the better enabled to do, from having put myself to the trouble of noting down the particulars, at the recital of which old Simon and myself have since laughed very heartily. You need not be surprised at his broad Scotch accent ; he has such a decided partiality for it, that he is commonly averse to using any other tongue, though no man speaks more politely than himself when he is so disposed, and when the persons he converses with render it necessary.—After having finished his first measure of indulgence, Mr Gray proceeded thus :—

“ ‘ Come now, Sir Simon, and I’ll help ye hame, ye auld rogue.—I am much obliged to you, Mr Gray, but I’ll try to gar my ain shanks serve my ain turn, and ye may e’en put your ain hand to your ain hasp, my friend.—If ye like, we’ll have anither gill, and then toddle thegither.—Beware o’ dram-drinking, Sir Simon ; ye’ll get an evil name in the clachan.—I beg your pardon, Mr Gray ; I have been a riddle to the folks ower lang already, and as I ne’er do aucht in a corner, but what I may do on the causey, everybody kens he’ll no mak onything mair or less o’ me by being inquisitive. Na, na, Mr Gray, ye’re a’ out there ; there is no ane in the parish would hear an ill word o’ Simon.—But ye’re an auld man, sir, and set an evil example to others.—

Ne’er a ane do I set an evil example to but yoursel, Mr Gray ; and for a’ your cant about sobriety, ye take your drams as regularly as I do ; and I defy you—I defy you or ony other man to say ye e’er saw me the waur o’ liquor in your life. Besides, Mr Gray, the progress of human life is like a journey from the equator to the north pole. We commence our career with the heat of passion and the light of hope, and travel on, till passion is quenched by indulgence, and hope, flying round the ball of life which is blackening before us, seems to come up behind us, mingled with dim and regretted reminiscences of things hoped for, obtained, enjoyed, and lost for ever but to memory :

Oh ! age has weary days,
And nights of sleepless pain.

Youth needs no stimulus, it is too hot already ; but when a man is shuffling forward into the Arctic circle of old age, he requires a warm potion to thaw the icicles that crust around his heart, and freeze up the streams of his affections. There’s for you, Mr Gray ; what do you think of that ?—Why, I think, Sir Simon, we’ll tell Duncan to fill’t again.—That now, that now, is friendly ; and so saying, he rung for the landlord to fetch him the means of prolonging his solitary conviviality.

“ This is that portion of Mr Gray’s dialogue with himself which M’Gowan and myself, perhaps officially, listened to ; but as we are upon the subject of our venerable friend’s peculiarities, it may not be out of place to recite a little poetical work, which he composed some time ago.” Having signified the pleasure I should derive from being favoured with the recital of a work from the pen of so eccentric a humorist as the dominie, Mr Cleekum proceeded to draw forth from his pocket and to read :—

THE MINISTER'S MARE.

The minister's mare was as gude a gray mare
 As ever was saddled, or bridled, or shod ;
 Be't foul or be't fair, be't late or be't air,
 She nichered aye gladly when takin' the road.

The minister late in the e'enin cam hame,
 And stabled his marie, and heapit her heck,
 And gae her a forpit o' oats to her wame,
 And theekit her cozily wi' an auld sack.

And the minister's wife wi' a bowet cam out,
 For a tenty and mensefu' wife was she ;
 Glowered round her for gangrels that might be about,
 And syne in the stable-door thrawed round the key.

And she oxtered the minister up the stair
 To his room, where his supper and slippers were het,
 Whaur a wee creepie-stool and an elbow chair
 At the blithe ingle-neuk were right cozily set.

As the reverend carle gaed ben the house laughin',
 And clappin' his wife, an' rubbin' his hands,
 She helpit him aff wi' his green tartan raughen,
 And frae 'neath his round chin loosed his lily-white bands.

When supper was ower, the minister birsled
 His shins on the creepie upon the hearth-stane ;
 Worn out wi' fatigue, to his roostin-place hirsled,
 And laid himsel down wi' a wearied-man's grane.

His canny wee wife saw him cozily happit,
 Syne drew back the chairs frae the warm ingle-side ;
 Put creesh in the ee o' the candle, and clappit
 Right kindly and couthily down by his side.

The cracks o' the twosome were kindly but few :
 The minister wi' a "hech-ho," turned him roun',
 O'er his cauld shouther-head the warm blanket he drew,
 Syne pu'd down his night-cap and snored snug and soun'.

The morning's bright bonfire, that bleezed in the east,
 Had meltit in heaven ilk wee siller stern,
 When the cock crawed reveillè to man, bird, and beast,
 As he sat on an auld knotty rung in the barn.

The dog in the watch-house yowled eerie and lang,
 And struggled right fiercely to break frae his chain ;

The auld chapel bell like a burial knell rang,
And groanings were heard as frae bodies in pain.

A loud rap cam rap to the minister's yett,
The minister's wife wondered wha might be there ;
While the reverend carle, glammering, graipit to get
His drawers and bauchels, to slip down the stair.

But he warily first frae the stair-winnock keekit,
To ken wha this early disturber might be ;
When he saw the dog loose, and the barn-door unsteekit,
And his mare at the yett, cap'ring wild to be free

Frae a blackavised rider, wha spurred her and banned her,
Wi' mony wild curses to tak to the road :
And he stuck like a burr, though campsterie he fand her,
While the minister cried, "There's been thieves here, gude --- !"

"Fie, Tibby rise," roared Mess John, loud as thunder,
"The mischief's come o'er us, we're herriet, undone ;
The barn's broke, the dog's loose, the mare's aff, and yonder
She's rinnin'—fie ! bring me my hat, coat, and shoon !"

His claes huddled on, wi' his staff in his han',
He out at the yett wi' a belly-flaught flew ;
While the stour that his mare raised in clouds o'er the lan',
Turned into a glaur-drop ilk clear blob o' dew.

The stour, borne alang wi' the wind strong and gusty,
Gar'd the minister look like a miller sae gray ;
And the sweat on his face, mixed wi' dust, grew as crusty
As if he were modelled in common brick-clay.

And sometimes he haltit, and sometimes he ran,
And sometime she sat himsel down in despair ;
And sometimes he grew angry, and sometimes began
To lighten his sair-burdened heart wi' a prayer.

But madly the rider o'er hill and o'er dale,
Wi' the minister's mare like a fire-flaught he flew ;
Whiles seen on a hill-top, whiles lost in a vale,
Till they baith looked like motes on the welkin sae blue.

The minister by the road-side sat him down,
As vexed and as wearied as man weel could be ;
Syne pu'd aff his wig, rubbed the sweat frae his crown,
And puffed, steghed, and graned like a man gaun to dee.

When an auld farmer carle, on his yaud trotting by,
Accosted Mess John as he sat in despair ;

Made a bow like a corn-sack, and as he drew nigh,
Raised his twa waukit loofs, cryin' "What brought ye there?"

"I'm sure it's nae mair than an hour since I saw ye
At Bourtree Brae-head, and that's eight miles awa !"
And he rabbit his een as he cried out, "Foul fa' me !
For glammery's come o'er me, or else you're grown twa."

"And where is your mare, for she stood at the door,
Wi' her bridle-reins drawn through a ring in the wa',
At Dawson's door-cheek, where I saw her before
I had drunk *deoch-an-dorus* wi' Donald M'Craw."

"Ye saw me !" said the minister ; "how could that be,
When I've only proceeded thus far on my road ?
And that this is mysel, by a glance ye may see."
"Why, then," cried the farmer, "the thing's vastly odd."

"But twa hours ago, sir, your double was sitting
At Dawson's fire-side,—faith ! as I thought, half fou,—
And ilk ane at hand thought it time to be flitting,
When ye cursed and blasphemed till the candle burned blue."

"Why, Saunders, it's surely been Sawtan ye've seen,
The foul thief himself, I could wad a gray groat ;
He staw my gray mare ;—just turn back, my auld friend,
Till I strip the foul thief of his sanctified coat.

"I've warsled wi' Sawtan for many a year ;
I've cloured him and loundered him aft times right sair ;
But the foul fiend has played me a pliskie, I fear ;
Lord save's, man, I ne'er heard the like, I declare.

"Fie, Saunders, let's mount, and to Dawson's let's hurry,
And chase the loon back to his ain lowin' hame ;
The tod's in the fauld, God's ain lambs he may worry ;
Come, Saunders, let's hunt him, Auld Clootie's fair game."

And they rode till they came to John Dawson's fore-door,
Whaur the minister lighted, but wadna step in,
When he heard how the deil in his ain likeness swore,
As he dirled at the door, for the third tappit hen.

And the folk were confounded,—amazed,—when they saw
The auld carle himself they had aft seen before ;
Some darned into corners, and some ran awa,
And ithers ran out, and glowered in at the door.

But the minister beckoned them a' to come back
To the room aff-and-on where the devil sat fou ;

In the wooden partition there gaped a wide crack,
That ilk ane, by turns, wi' amazement looked through.

And there they heard Cloots, in a big elbow-chair,
Snore like thunder far-aff, and now sleeping right sound,
And some thought his feet didna look like a pair,
For the tae o' the ae boot to the heel was turned round.

And they saw, when the ither foot once or twice moved,
That the boot on that foot just turned round the same way ;
Which, to the onlookers, sufficiently proved,
They were baith cloven feet,—ay, as clear as the day.

They saw a bit kitlin, that friskit and pattit
A muckle black tossel below the big chair ;
And it swung like a pend'lum, as wee baudrons clawtit
The end that hung down like a bunch o' horse-hair.

When Dawson's bull-terrier, streeked on the hearth-stane,
Saw Clootie's tail wagging, he barkit like mad :
Sprung till't like a fury, and tugged might and main,
And the deevil himsel couldna lowsen his haud.

But the deil started up wi' big chair, dog, an' a',
And staggered, and stampit, and ance or twice fell ;
Mess John cried, "Lord save us!"—Like lightning, awa
Flew deevil, and big chair, and terrier, to — !

"There's a strange production for you," said Mr Cleekum, as he folded the paper and replaced it in his pocket.

"A strange production, indeed," said I ; "what could be Mr Gray's object in writing such a poem?"

"Merely to please himself, sir, I suppose," was the lawyer's answer.

"But," continued I, "has it any reference to any particular character or occurrence; or is it merely an extravagant fiction of the dominie's own brain?"

"It refers to an old popular tradition," answered Mr Cleekum, "concerning a pious predecessor of our worthy minister, Mr Singleheart ; and, though the currency of its belief is now somewhat crossed and obstructed by an adverse current of growing intelligence, it still floats in the memories and imaginations of those venerable annalists, the old women of the village, with whom

the idle story was likely to perish for ever, if the dominie's metrical version had not contributed to prolong it."

Various remarks were made upon the merits of the production ; but as they were all blended with statements and allusions relative to local characters and incidents not connected with my present object, I resume my interrupted narrative.

The children still continued round the door, shouting, halooing, and acting a thousand extravagances, nor could they be prevailed upon to depart till they saw the "maister." Simon, who had so far collected his scattered senses, and renewed his exhausted strength, as to be able to give them that gratification, had no sooner opened the door for the purpose of receiving the congratulations of his scholars, than those who were nearest leaped up and

embraced him with unfeigned affection. They pulled and lugged him, crying, "Maister, maister!" while the beloved instructor stood hugging his chubby associates, and embracing them with all the warmth of an affectionate parent. These kind-hearted little beings, after receiving another token of the old man's goodness, in the shape of pieces of biscuit and gingerbread, ran off, huzzing, to inform their parents of the marvellous escape of their venerable preceptor.

Simon, being disengaged from the warm embraces of his pupils, came into the room where the landlord, Cleekum the lawyer, and myself were sitting. I had now full leisure and opportunity to examine the appearance of this singular and eccentric character. It was completely at variance with every characteristic of modern gentility. His dress betokened the hand of the cunning craftsman of the last century, or his own whimsical taste had dictated to some modern son of the goose and thimble the antique shape of his habiliments; but, as we were before informed by the landlord, they were entirely the fabrication of his own taste and ingenuity. His single-breasted, rusty-black coat tapered away from the shoulders towards his lower extremities in the pyramidal shape, and when unbuttoned, or unclasped, rather, swung its copious folds round his jolly form with cumbrous and fantastical elegance. Two mother-of-pearl buttons, of uncommon circumference, and encircled with brass rings, were stuck as ornaments upon the haunches, and the breast was decorated with grotesque circles of the same fantastical description, with the addition of a handsome row of bright silver clasps. The vest, with its massy superfluity of cloth, parted in the middle, and its ample pockets descended half-way down his thigh, leaving a space between their separation and the head of his breeches for his bright linen shirt

to shine through, in the shape of an isosceles triangle. His blue plush breeches had three chequered or diced brass buttons to preserve their connexion, and terminated at the knee with the genuine old Cameronian cut. His stockings were light blue, sprinkled with little oblong dots of white; and his shoes, cut square across the toes to save his corns, were held upon his feet by two antiquated silver buckles of uncommon magnitude and curious workmanship. His personal appearance was that of a substantial old bachelor, on whom nature had generously bestowed a sound constitution, and it was evident from his looks that he by no means despised that invaluable inheritance. His face inclined to the square, but the features were all curvilinear, rather prominent, and flushed with that rosy hue of health which so often beams from the countenances of the sons and daughters of rustic labour. His forehead was highly expressive of intellect, but the nether part of the face indicated that lubberly sort of feeling which glories in a life of good humoured ease and fat contentment. His eyes were small, of a bright blue, but not a pair, for the one squinted outward through the interstices of his gray, bristly eyebrows; which, along with a nether lip somewhat pendulous, a mouth turned up at the corners, and a long flat chin, gave the whole face a comical and risible expression.

During the time that Cleekum was reading his notes of the dominie's solitary dialogue, Mr Singleheart, the village minister, M'Glashan the piper, and some others belonging to the village, came into the room, which seemed to be as much public property as the village smithy. On the dominie's entrance all rose to salute and congratulate him upon his fortunate escape; and I could see, from the cordial manner in which each in his turn grasped the old man's hand, that each had his heart

at his finger-ends. It was not that puppyish forefinger-and-thumb sort of salutation which clips another frosty forefinger-and-thumb as if dreading contagion, but a hearty, honest grappling of fist with fist, which drew the blood from its fountain with a thrilling impulse, and sent its current warm and glowing into the clenched extremities, which were shaken so violently, and for such a length of time, that an imaginative and hasty person might suppose, in the rapidity of his decision, that each individual was disposed to graft himself upon the dominie, whose right arm, at length, seemed as feeble as that of a poor gut-scraper, who has jigged at a country wedding for a whole night.

When Simon entered, I was introduced to him by Cleekum, whom I had by this time discovered to be an old school-fellow of my own. He saluted me with a frank and pleasant smile, and squeezed my hand so cordially, that I immediately felt that spontaneous and indefinable feeling of attachment towards him which, though the electric emotion of a moment, is often the forerunner of a long course of friendly intimacy. Upon my father's name being mentioned, Simon recognised him as a playmate of his earlier days, and gave me a kindly invitation to spend a few days with him, which circumstances obliged me to refuse. Simon then took the opportunity of introducing me more particularly to the rest of the company, on account of "the old man," as he said, meaning my father, for whom he seemed to entertain a deep sentiment of regard. He last of all recommended me with an air of serious solemnity to the notice of M'Gowan.

"This gentleman," said he, pointing to the last-mentioned individual, who appeared to be a singular compound of officiousness, selfishness, and benevolence, and who seemed to be at all times a standing joke with my venerable

friend, "has some pretensions to honesty. He'll do ye a good turn sometimes when ye're no thinking o't; and, unlike the most of other men, he likes his friends the better the longer they sit beside him. Familiarity does not breed contempt with him, but poverty does; and yet he's no the hindmost to help misery to an awmous when he's in a right mood for being good-hearted, and that happens aye ance or twice in a twalmonth."

"Come, come, now," said M'Gowan, gravely, "we'll hae nae mair o' that, Mr Gray. Ye're an unco wag. It was only yestreen ye got me into a foul scrape wi' our friend Cleekum there, and he flang out o' the house, swearing like a very heathen that he wad tak the law o' me for defamation o' character."

"For the sake of peace and good fellowship," said Mr Singleheart, "it will be meet and advisable for us to refrain, as much as in us lies, from profane joking and oonseasonable raillery; because joking has small yedification in it, and raillery is a sort of salt-and-pepper compound, whilk burneth up the inward man with a fervent heat, and profiteth not, neither is meet for bodily nourishment."

"I would be o' your thocht, Mr Sinklart," said Donald M'Glashlan the piper; "I would be making peace wi' peast and pody"—

The piper was thus proceeding with his Highland exhortations to harmony, when Cleekum, who was sitting looking out at the window, started suddenly from his seat and hurried out of the house. M'Gowan's curiosity being roused by Cleekum's abrupt departure, he followed him to the door, and beheld him and M'Harrigle the cattle-dealer at some distance, earnestly engaged in conversation. All that M'Gowan's ear could catch of their discourse was concerning the mad bull, M'Harrigle's property, and the occa-

sional mention of the dominie's name.

"There's mischief a-brewing down the lane there," said M'Gowan, when he came in. "Cleekum and that foolish passionate body M'Harrigle are standing yonder, an' I could hear they were sayin' something o' you, Mr Gray, but what it was I couldna weel mak out. He's a doited, credulous body, that M'Harrigle; an' I could wager a sax-pence Cleekum's makin' a deevil o' him some way or anither."

M'Gowan's surmises were suddenly interrupted by vociferous and clamorous exclamations at the door, and their cause did not remain long unexplained. The door of the apartment flew open, and, rattling against the wall with violence, admitted the author of this fresh disturbance. It was M'Harrigle. He was a short, square-shouldered man, of fierce aspect, whose naturally harsh features were much exaggerated by a powerful and alarming expression of rage and resentment. The face was, indeed, at first sight indescribable, and the tumultuous feelings and passions that deepened and darkened every line of it wrought such fearful and sudden changes upon its muscular expression that the whole seemed at first a wizard compound of different identities.

Upon entering, his first salutation was a deafening and broken torrent of cursing, poured forth upon the dominie, as the fancied author of the flight and death of the mad animal, whose career had spread such consternation through the village. It was in vain that the whole company remonstrated against the rudeness, absurdity, and brutality of his conduct. He stood on the middle of the floor with his fist doubled, menaced each of us in our turn, as we interposed between him and the object of his resentment, or smiled at his folly and extravagance, and once or twice grappled the large oaken cudgel with which he impelled his horned pro-

perty, as if he intended to commit the like beastly violence on those around him. Cleekum had retired to a corner to enjoy the sport his wicked waggery had created. The dominie sat composedly, and squinted at the cattle-dealer with a sly and jocular leer, which showed his soul delighted even in a very serious joke, from an inveterate habit of extracting fun from all the petty and frivolous incidents of common life. At times he seemed lost in a careless, musing mood, and at other times burst out into immoderate fits of laughter, which seemed to me perfectly unaccountable. He then, in the true spirit and feeling of an enthusiastic elocutionist, recited from Shakspeare some favourite passage, warbled out a fragment of some ancient ditty, every now and then interspersing it with shrill and fitful passages of a new sonnata, which he had been practising on the violin, whose shrill treble fell in between the intervals of M'Harrigle's bass notes, like loose sand or gravel strewed over a rude foundation of ruble work. "D——ye," said M'Harrigle, rising in his wrath at every fresh interruption of the dominie, and maddened at his really provoking coolness and indifference, "d——ye, ye think it a' a joke to hunt a man's cattle to destruction, and then mak a fool o' himsel wi' your blackguard and unknown tongues! Confound your hide, you glee'd, fiddling vagabond, an it werna for your coat, I would harle your hide ower your lugs like a sark! Pay me my siller—pay me my siller for the beast, or I'll turn the nose on your face like the pin o' a hand-screw. Down wi' the dust—I'll no leave the room till I hae satisfaction o' ye ae way or ither, that's for certain."

"Let there be peace," said Mr Singleheart, "for out of strife cometh a multitude of evils; and he who in vain taketh the name of his Maker shall not be held guiltless. You are an evil person, M'Harrigle; and if you refrain

not from that profane and heathenish habit of cursing, we will, by the advice and council of our Kirk-Session, be obligated to debar you from all kirk preevileges, and leave you to be devoured and swallowed up by the evil one."

"I beg your pardon," said the credulous and superstitious cattle-dealer ; "I didna mean offence to you or ony man in the room ; but I'll hae my ain. But it's you, sir—it's you, sir," continued he, addressing the dominie repeatedly, and extending the tone of his voice at every repetition, till he had strained it to the most astounding pitch of vociferation ; "it's you, sir, that set ane o' your mischievous vagabonds to hunt the poor dumb animal, till he ran red wud wi' rage, and flew ower the craig head. And now he's at the bottom o' the linn, and fient be licket's to be seen o' him, but an ill-faured hash o' hide, an' banes, and harrigles, sooming an' walloping at the bottom o' the pool."

"Somebody's blawn an ill sough in your lug, friend," said the dominie, as he caught M'Harrigle gently by the sleeve, and invited him to sit down.

"Aff haun's," cried M'Harrigle, rudely repelling the dominie's invitation,—"aff haun's, I say ; no man shall handle me like a brute beast. I ken what's right as weel's ony man, and I'll allow no man to straik me wi' the hair, to wyse me his ain gate, and syne row my tail to gar me rin by my ain byre door. I want no favours of ony man, but I'll hae my ain, if there's law and justice in the land."

M'Harrigle proceeded at great length to insist upon his right of restitution, bespattering his slaughter-house observations with abominable oaths, like dirty shreds of dunghill rags sewed on a beggar's doublet ; while the dominie sat musing, swinging backward and forward in his chair, making mental and sometimes audible quotations from the liquid Latin, and, at other times,

reciting Greek professorially, *ore rotundo*. At length, awakening from his learned reverie, and looking over his shoulder to M'Harrigle, he said, in a tone most provokingly cool and indifferent,—

"Were ye cursing, M'Harrigle? Ye shouldna curse, ye sinfu' body ; for an ill life maks an ill hinder-end, and Sawtan's but a rough nurse to spread the sheets and draw the curtains o' ane's death-bed."

The enraged cattle-dealer, finding all further threats and remonstrances unavailing, sat down in sullen and silent indignation, and, with his arms folded across his breast, his eyebrows knit, and his upper teeth firmly compressed against his nether lip, he scowled upon the supposed author of his wrongs, with an expression of face unutterably horrible. He had just sat down when Grierson the messenger brought in a tall, yellow, raw-boned thing of a boy, about fourteen years of age. He had been seized in Sir Robert's poultry-yard, and although he had nothing in his possession to convict him as a criminal, his manner was so embarrassed, and his appearance altogether so suspicious, that the servants laid hold on him, and committed him to the charge of the officer above mentioned, to be carried before a Justice of the Peace and interrogated. He was accordingly conveyed to M'Gowan's, where the officer expected to find Christopher Ramsay of Wrendykeside, who, he was informed, had just alighted at the inn from his gig. He had gone, however, and the officer was about to depart with his charge, when the dominie called him back, and looking pleasantly at the boy, exclaimed, "Ah, Geordie, are ye there, ye wild loon?" The boy started at the voice of his old preceptor, whom he had not before observed. He indeed had heard and believed that his venerable instructor had been torn to pieces by the fury of the mad animal, whose

destruction had roused M'Harrigle's wrath to such a pitch of frenzy. He gazed upon the dominie with open mouth, and with a pair of large round eyes, much dilated beyond their usual circumference by an overpowering feeling of astonishment ; grew pale, and trembled so fearfully that his gruff guardian was compelled by humanity to let him have a seat beside his old master, who rose for his accommodation. The afflicted youth made an effort to speak, but in vain. He stretched out his two hands, grasped that of his master which was extended towards him, looked up in his face, and sobbed as if his heart would burst. The tears ran in floods down his cheeks, and he at length cried out in a choked undertone of bitter agony,—

“ Maister, will ye forgie me ? Will ye forgie me ? Will they hang me for’t ? ”

“ Blessings on’s, man, Geordie,” cried the dominie, “ what’s wrang wi’ ye ? ”

“ Oh ! ” cried the afflicted boy, “ my father, and mother, and brothers, and as sisters, and a’ will get a sair heart for me yet. Oh ! ” and he continued to cry distractedly.

“ The deil tak the laddie,” said M'Harrigle, “ it maks a man’s heart as saft as ill-fed veal to look at him. What’s come ower ye, ye blubbering stirk ? ”

Mr Singleheart spoke not a word to him, but continued clapping him on the shoulder, while M'Glashan, every now and then, cried out, “ Hout, laddie, you’ll be makin’ a fool o’ us a’ noo,” and so saying, he drew the back of his brawny fist across his eyes several times, began to finger his bagpipe in silence, as if he would soothe his sympathy by the imagination of playing some merry spring, but his fingers, after two or three rapid dumb-show flourishes, stood as stationary upon the holes as if the piper and his instrument of sound had been

both chiselled out of the same stone. The boy still vented his grief as clamorously and bitterly as ever, clung to his master with the agony of a conscience-stricken penitent, and cried,—

“ Will ye forgie me ? It was me that hunted the bull that I thocht had killed ye.”

“ You, ye vagabond ! ” said M'Harrigle, collarng the unhappy youth. Cleekum seized the opportunity of running off, rightly considering that he had carried the joke far beyond the bounds of discretion, and really apprehensive that the evil spirit he had conjured up would turn upon himself and rend him in its fury. “ You ! ” continued the irascible cattle-dealer ; “ what do ye think that ye deserve, you ill-gien neer-do-weel ? But I’ll mak your father pay.”

This last consideration loosened his grasp, and he seized the dominie’s hands with both his own, begged a thousand pardons with a rueful countenance, and in accents very different from his former imprecatory addresses. During the time that he was making this sincere and penitent apology for his rudeness and misconduct, he several times glanced round the apartment for Cleekum, crying out, “ Where is that blackguard scribe ? It was him that did it a.’ ” He was safe, however.

“ There’s nae harm done where there’s nae ill meant,” said the dominie, in reply to M'Harrigle’s confession of repentance ; “ only ye shouldna flee on a body like an ill-bred tyke, when an ill-disposed neebour cries ‘ shoo ’ to ye. Dinna ye be ower ready in telling your mind to anybody, but let your thoughts cool as weel as your parritch.”

“ ‘Od, Simon,” rejoined the cattle-dealer, “ I am sure ye can hardly forgie me for the ill-sauered words I hae said to ye the night ; I wish I could forget and forgie them mysel. I’m a wild brier o’ a body ; I’m aye into some confounded hobbleshow or anither.

But I'm glad, man, I didna lay hands on ye, for if I had I wad ne'er hae forgi'en mysel for't as lang as I live. Can I do naething to mak amends to ye for what I've done?"

"Naething at a'," replied the dominie, "but to settle as easily as ye can wi' the laddie's father."

"Peradventure," Mr Singleheart suggested, "the youth may be released from his captivity, and sent to the habitation of his father."

"There'll be twa ways o' that faith!" exclaimed Grierson. "Na, na, though the hangman has lost a job, I'll be paid for my trouble. I dinna gang about beating bushes for linties, for deil-be-llickit but the pleasure o' seeing them fleein' back again. I'll cage him. Ye're a' ready enough to wind a hank aff a neebour's reel, or tak a nievefu' out o' his pock neuk, but ne'er a ane o' ye'll gie a duddy loon ae thread to mend his breeks, or a hungry beggar a handfu' o' meal to haud his wame frae stickin' to his back bane."

"There," said M'Harrigle, tossing down a small sum of money as a bribe to stop the mouth of this snarling terrier of the law, "tak that, and save the parish the expense o' buying you a tether."

Grierson picked up the money and departed, leaving behind him as tokens of his displeasure, some muttered and unintelligible growlings; and the boy was set at liberty, and sent home to his father.

"Come, come," said M'Harrigle, "this affair 'll no be weel ended till we hae sowthered our hearts again wi' a half mutchkin o' M'Gowan's best. Come, Duncan, draw the tow, and tell the gudewife to fetch the mutchkin stoup, and het water to kirsten't. I'm sure I'm a fule o' a body, for my lang tongue, my short temper, and my short wit, hae keepit me in a fry a' the days o' me."

"Ye're vera right, M'Harrigle,"

said the landlord, rubbing his hand briskly at the blithe proposal. "I'll ring for Tibbie; she'll bring us something worth preein' out o' her ain bole. She's a bit eident body, and aye keeps a drap heart's comfort in an orra neuk."

M'Gowan pulled a hare's foot at the end of a rope, which was suspended from an unhewn piece of knotted wood, of a three-legs-of-man shape, fastened by a strong screw nail into the wall, and a solemn bell, most unlike the merry tinkle of an alehouse warning, was heard jowin' and croorin' in a distant apartment, from which our hostess presently made her appearance.

Her aspect and demeanour at first sight bespoke your affection. There was in her face a look of blithe contentment with her condition; in her dress a neat attention to cleanliness and simplicity, and in her whole manner and behaviour a hearty and honest desire, not only to be happy herself, but to make all around her equally comfortable. She curtseyed respectfully and smilingly when she entered the room; but it was not that cut-and-dried sort of politeness which publicans in general indiscriminately pay to all their customers;—it was a kind of friendly greeting, mingled with no small portion of gratitude towards those on whom she was conscious she depended for subsistence. It was that warm and kindly expression of affection which brought one who was removed from his family fireside in mind of his mother, and which made imagination point out her habitation as a quiet resting place, where the unsettled sojourner might stop and glean from the barren field of earthly enjoyment some few ripe ears of happiness.

"My gude will to ye a', gentlemen; I'm thinkin' ye were ca'in'."

"That we were," said M'Harrigle. "Fetch us a mutchkin o' your best gudewife, and some het water."

"Ye'se no want that," replied our hostess; "but ye'll aiblins aforehand be

pleased to tak a tasting o' supper ; I ha'e ready for ye yonder, as I guessed some o' ye might stand in need o' some sma refreshment. I'll send it ben to ye in twa or three minutes, and syne get ye onything else ye want. Ay will ye," said the motherly, sonsy, little woman, as she shut the door behind her with a gentleness of hand which showed that her affections had some regard even for things inanimate.

A beautiful tall girl immediately made her appearance, and prepared the round oaken table before us for the reception of the landlady's hospitality, by spreading over it a table-cloth of snowy whiteness, and in arranging the shining implements, which, from their brilliant cleanliness, seemed to be kept as much for ornaments to the kitchen shelf, as for the more vulgar purpose of preparing food for the process of mastication. She was evidently the daughter of the hostess. Her countenance indicated all the amiable qualities of her mother, but her manners were more polished,—at least they seemed so, perhaps from the circumstance of her language being pure English, unmixed with any of the Doric dialect of her parent. By the mutual assistance of the landlady and her daughter, the table soon groaned beneath a load of savoury substantialities, most provokingly pleasant to all but myself. Our chairs being drawn forward towards the attractive influence of the supper, and grace being said by the reverend Mr Singleheart, they all proceeded lustily and cheerfully to the work of repletion.

"Oogh !" says M'Glashan the piper, as he opened his Celtic jaws, and disclosed two formidable rows of white stakes, which stood as a sort of turnpike gate to the entrance of his stomach, and demanded toll of all that passed that way,—"oogh ! this'll pe tooin' her good, for her fu' bag maks a loot trone."

"Verily, it is both savoury and re-

freshing," said Mr Singleheart, as he sawed away with a suppleness of elbow by no means consistent with the staid solemnity of his usual motions.

"My faith !" said M'Harrigle to the dominie, "your mill gangs glibly."

"Ay," says the dominie, "the still sow licks up the draff, and a heapit plate maks hungry men scant o' cracks."

"And scant o' havins too, I think," said M'Gowan ; "for the stranger gentleman's sittin' there before us wi' a toom plate."

"Let him alone," said the dominie ; "it's time he were learning that a man that's hamely's aye welcome, and that frank looks mak kind hearts."

Cleekum had secreted himself in the kitchen, and, though indebted to Mrs M'Gowan's fidelity for his preservation from M'Harrigle's indignation, he was by no means satisfied with the amount of the night's amusement. It was at all times a source of delight to him to observe men acting extravagantly and foolishly under misconception and false impressions of one another ; and he at no time hesitated to invent and circulate fabrications, generally innocent, indeed, as to intention, but sometimes productive of serious consequences. He was commonly the most taciturn individual in company, and notwithstanding his frolicsome and mischievous disposition, enjoyed the reputation among his neighbours of being a skilful lawyer, and what is still more creditable, a man of unimpeached integrity. This last quality, in some measure, atoned for his love of mischief, and enabled him to perform with impunity wild pranks, which might have seriously injured almost any other man.

When he saw Dame M'Gowan preparing supper, his whimsical imagination suggested to him the very ridiculous and extravagant trick of making M'Glashan believe that his favourite bagpipes formed a part of the entertainment. This he accomplished by

giving a little urchin a penny to steal unperceived into the room and fetch them away, and an old pair that lay on a shelf in the kitchen furnished him with the ready materials for carrying his whimsical conceit into execution. Ribbons of the same breadth and colour with those which garnished M'Glashan's pipes were purchased, and tied upon the drone, which was then attached to the "chieftain o' the pudding race," which had never before perhaps been dignified with such notable marks of distinction. Mrs M'Gowan whispered to her husband a hint of the rarity preparing for them in the kitchen, and he gave a sly intimation of the same to the dominie.

Part of the dishes being removed, the whole company sat in silent expectation of this new specimen of culinary skill, for the whispered hint had by this time been communicated to all except M'Glashan himself. The dominie squinted at M'Gowan, with that sly and jocular expression of face for which he was so remarkable. The landlord himself could with difficulty restrain his risibility within the compass of a well-bred smile. It was evident, from the various workings of his features, that it required no small exertion to master down his inward emotion, and keep it from leaping forth and divulging the secret of the coming joke.

After a delay of a few minutes our good hostess entered with a pair of bagpipes on a large plate. She placed them on the table and hurried out of the room, evidently for the purpose of enjoying a prudential and private laugh. There stood the piper's instrument on the middle of the table, "warm, reeking, rich," steaming forth its appetising fragrance, regaling every nose, delighting every eye, and provoking instantaneous peals of laughter from all but the supposed proprietor of this fantastical but seemingly substantial piece of good cheer.

(4)

"Cod mak a mercy on us a' ! An' I will teclare, a poiled pagpipe ! Who'll be toing that, noo ? Oogh ! oogh !" said the enraged musician, snuffing himself into an ungovernable fit of rage, raising his brawny and ponderous form into a threatening attitude and doubling his knotty, iron fists, with the design of hammering the offender, whose wicked temerity had dared to brave the indignation of this half-reclaimed mountaineer. "An you'll offer to jag him, and let out his win' too, oogh ! you'll better be a' looking ower a house-rigging o' twa storey. You'll poil your tam haggis in my pag, and sotter my trone too, and the vera ribbons I had at the competeetion. Shust mine !" cried the enraged Highlander, looking more intently at the Scotch haggis with its whimsical appendages. "An you'll no tell me the man wha would be toing that, I will mak the room my ain in five minutes. I taur you all to touch him. I'll mak a tead man o' her—oogh ! oogh !"

I was the only individual in the company who seemed to feel any apprehensions about the consequence of this absurd piece of wagery. All the rest enjoyed it rarely, not even excepting the Rev. Mr Singleheart, who, though possessing none of the elements of jocularity himself, was yet at times singularly well pleased to second a piece of innocent fun with his individual portion of jocose laughter.

"Sit down, ye muckle Highland stirk," said M'Harrigle, "and no mak a sough there about a boiled bagpipe. I'se warrant it's a bit of gude eatin' ; and we'll see what can be made o't when we hae pu'd awa thae whigma-leeries that are stickin' round about it. Faith ! I wadna gie a mouthfu' o' your bagpipe, M'Glashan, for a' the music that ever came out o' its drone."

"It's quite a musical feast," quoth the dominie ; "only I fear we'll be troubled wi' wind in our stomachs after making a meal o't. Sit down, M'Glashan," he

o

continued, "for, as you were sayin' before, a fu' bag maks a loud drone."

"Sit town ! sit town ! and see six Sassenach teevils tefour the bagpipes that hae pelanged to a M'Glashan for twa hunder year ! Oogh ! won the competeetion too !"

The gaunt descendant of the Gael stood grinding his teeth, opening and clenching his big bony fists, as if he fancied himself about to grapple with some sturdy antagonist. His large blue eyes flaming from beneath the fringe of his knitted eyebrow, the big muscles encircling the corner of either eye, and curving round the mouth in deep hard folds, and the outward shelving upper-lip, puckered with a thousand wrinkles, were rendered more picturesque and fearful from being hedged round by an uncommon mass of bristly gray hair, two large portions of which hung on his broad, flat cheeks, like two large bunches of burned furse, while the whole rugged exterior was rendered still more imposing by the association of his favourite guttural interjection, "oogh !" His aspect lowered so grim and threatening, his "ooghs" became so loud and numerous, that all began to think it time to soothe the spirit of this Highland storm, lest its rising wrath should descend with deadly vengeance on those around him.

The landlord stepped out, and returned with M'Glashan's instrument. The mountaineer looked astonished, snatched it from him with eagerness, eyed it round and round, hugged and kissed the darling object of his affection, and poured into its capacious bag a stream of wind which immediately issued in a wild and stormy pibroch. Delighted with his own performance, "he hotched and blew with might and main," mingling, every now and then, with his unearthly music, the half-recitative bass of a broad rumbling laugh, while M'Harrigle's rugged terrier, with his two fore paws upon the piper's knees,

spun out long and eerie howls of canine sympathy. It was in vain that we praised the savoury Scotch haggis, and recommended it to the palate of M'Glashan. His heart, as well as his wind, was in his bagpipe, and he never once deigned to return an answer to our reiterated invitations ; but having exhausted his scanty musical budget, the contents of which amounted to no more than a few Highland reels and strathspeys, he droned away in voluntaries so utterly horrible and dissonant, that Simon Gray, after swallowing a few morsels with as rueful contortions of visage as if every mouthful had been dipped in sand, ran out of the room holding his ears, and giving vent to a harsh German *ach!* which was powerfully expressive of his crucified sense of hearing. The piper piped on, and seemed to enjoy a sort of triumph over the wounded feelings of the departed dominie. None of the rest of the company followed his example, but each individual sat still with as much coolness and composure as if his ears had been hermetically sealed against the grunting, groaning, and yelling of this infernal musical-engine.

M'Glashan's tempestuous hostility at length ceased, and the dominie returned as the large punch-bowl was shedding its fragrant effluvia through the apartment, giving to every eye a livelier lustre, to every heart a warmer glow, and to every tongue a more joyous and voluble expression. No more than two or three glasses had circulated when Mr Singleheart and the dominie left the generous beverage to the enjoyment of the more profane and less responsible members of this assemblage of convivial spirits.

"He is an ill-hearted tyke who can't both give and take a joke," said Cleekum, as he burst abruptly into the apartment. "You would not certainly quarrel with an old friend, M'Harrigle ?"

"No, I'll be hanged if I do," was the reply of the cattle-dealer; "but Lord, man, if I had cloured Simon, I might hae run the kintra. Faith! if ye gang delvin' about this gate for fun, ye'll set your fit on a wasp's 'byke some day. If I had but gotten my hands ower ye twa hours syne, there would hae been a job for the doctor. Let there be nae mair about it;—there's a glass to ye."

"The night drove on wi' sangs and clatter."

One merry story suggested another, till the potent spirit of the bowl covered some all over with slumber "as with a cloak," laid others prostrate beneath the table, and to the maudlin eyes of the unconquered survivors presented every object as if of the dual number. The bustle and hurry of preparation in the kitchen had died away, orders for an additional supply of liquor were more tardily executed, and the kitchen-maid came in half undressed, holding a short gown together at the breast, rubbing her eyes, and staggering under the influence of a stolen nap at the fireside, from which she had been hastily and reluctantly roused. Cleekum, M'Harrigle, M'Glashan, and myself were the only individuals who had any pretensions to sobriety. The landlord had prudently retired to rest an hour before. Silence reigned in the whole house, except in one apartment, and silence would have put down her velvet footstep there also, but for the occasional roars of M'Harrigle, who bellowed as if he had been holding conversational communion with his own nowt; and the engine-without-oil sort of noise that M'Glashan made as he twanged, sputtered, and grunted his native tongue to M'Harrigle, who was turning round to the piper every now and then, crying "D——n your Gaelic, you've spewed enough o't the night; put a bung in your throat, you beast!"

A few flies that buzzed and murmured round the room were the only joyous and sleepless creatures that seemed disposed to prolong the revelry. The cold toddy having lost its delicious relish, produced loathing, and its former exhilarating effluvia was now sickening to the nose. The candle-wick stood in the middle of the flickering flame like a long nail with a large round head, and sending the light in fitful flashes against the walls. The cock had sounded his clarion, the morning seamed the openings of the window-shutters with lines of light, and the ploughman, roused to labour, went whistling past the door. I opened the window-shutter. A glare of light rushed in and condensed the flame of our little luminary into a single bud of pale light, whose sickliness seemed to evince a kindred sympathy with the disorderly remains of the night's revelry, and with the stupefied senses and exhausted bodies of the revellers themselves.

I looked out of the window. All was silent, save the far-off whistle of the ploughman who had passed, and the continual roar of the cataract; and all was motionless, except the blue feathery smoke which puffed from a single-chimney, and floated down the glen in a long wavering stream. How chill and piercing the morning air feels to the nervous and debilitated reveller, and how reproachfully does the light of another day steal in upon the unseemly disorder of his privacy! Almost every man feels himself to be somewhat of a blackguard who is thus surprised.

Going home drunk in a summer morning! What a beast! Feebleness of knees, that would gladly lie down by the wayside,—headache, that makes the brain a mere puddle of dirty recollections, and dismal anticipations,—dimness of eyes, that makes every visible object caricaturish and monstrous,—filthiness of apparel enough to shame a very scavenger,—and a heart sick almost to

the commission of *felo de se*. Zig-zag, thump, thump, down again, howling, swearing, praying. It is a libel on the brute creation to call it beastliness. Brutes do no such thing. And the morning, how fresh, clear, green, and glittering ! Hang that fellow,—going to work, I imagine. What on earth roused him at such an unseasonable hour ? To be a spy upon me, I suppose. Who are you, sir ?—A poor man, please your honour, sir.—A poor man ! go and be hanged then.—These birds yelping from that thicket are more unmusical than hurdy-gurdy, marrow-bone and cleaver. I wish each of them had a pipe-stopple in its windpipe. I never heard such abominable discord. The whole world is astir. Who told them I was going home at this time in the morning ? Who is that singing the “Flower o’ Dunblane” at the other side of the hedge ? A milkmaid—“and the milkmaid singeth blithe.” Ah, John Milton, thy notions of rural felicity were formed in a closet. You may have a peep of her through this “slap.” Rural innocence !—a mere humbug,—a dirty, tawdry, pudding-legged, blowsy-faced, sun-burnt drab. What a thing for a shepherdess in a pastoral ! Confound these road trustees ; they have been drawing the road through a bore, and have made it ten times its common length, and a hundred times narrower than its common breadth. Horribly rough ; no man can walk steadily on it. Have the blockheads not heard of M’Adam ? In the words of the Lawrencekirk album epigrammatist,—

“The people here ought to be hanged,
Unless they mend their ways.”

Hast thou, gentle reader, ever gone

home drunk in a summer morning, when thy shame, that is day-light, was rising in the east ? Sulky—a question not to be answered. So much for thy credit, for there be in this sinful and wicked world men who boast of such things. I am glad thou art not one of them. Neither do I boast of such doings ; for, gentle reader, I went to bed. My bedroom was one of M’Gowan’s garret-rooms. Cleekum and M’Harrigle, who lived at some distance, thought proper to retire to rest before visiting their own firesides ; and M’Glashan, being a sort of vagrant musician, who had no legal domicile in any particular place, had always a bed assigned him in M’Gowan’s when he visited the village.

Stretched in bed after a day’s travelling and a night’s carousing—exquisite pleasure ! It is worth a man’s while to travel thirty or forty miles to enjoy such a blessed luxury. After a few yawnings, pokings out and drawings up of the legs, the whole body begins to feel a genial glow of heat, and he is worse than an infidel who in such a pleasurable mood does not feel disposed to bless his Maker. Everything being properly arranged, the curtains carefully drawn around, the night-cap pulled down over the ears and folded upward on the brow, the pillow shifted, shuffled, and nicely adjusted to the head, the clothes pulled and lugged about, till there is not a single air-hole left to pinch the body, the downy bed itself, by sundry tossings and turnings, converted into an exact mould for the particular part of the body that has sunk into it, then does the joyous spirit sing to itself inwardly, with the mute melody of gratitude,—“I’m wearin’ awa, Jean !”—*Blackwood’s Magazine*, 1826.

THE MILLER AND THE FREEBOOTER.

BY SIR THOMAS DICK LAUDER.

IN Glenquoich, in Aberdeenshire, in the early part of last century, there was a corn-mill erected for the use of the neighbourhood, and as the construction and management of such machines were ill understood in that part of Scotland at the time, a miller was brought from the low country to superintend it. In this neighbourhood there lived at that time a certain Donald Mackenzie, a hero remarkable for his haughty and imperious manner, and known by the appellation of "Donald Unasach," or Donald the Proud. Being a native of Glenquoich, he knew as little of the English language as the miller did of Gaelic. He was an outlaw, addicted to freebooting, and of so fierce and unruly a temper, that the whole country stood in awe of him. One circumstance regarding him struck everyone with superstitious awe, and created much conjecture and speculation among those around him : he was never known to be without abundance of meal, and yet he was never known to carry any corn to the mill.

But the sagacious miller of Glenquoich soon discovered that, in order to bilk him of his proper mill-dues, the caitiff was in the habit of bringing his grain to the mill in the night, and grinding it, and carrying it off before morning. To charge him directly with this fraud, was too dangerous an attempt. But the miller ventured to ask him now and then, quietly, how he did for meal, as he never brought any corn to the mill ; to which the freebooter never returned any other answer than one in Gaelic, signifying that "strong is the hand of God !"

Provoked at last, the miller determined to take his own way of curing the evil ; and, having some previous notion of the

next nocturnal visit of his unwelcome customer, he took care, before leaving the mill in the evening, to remove the bush, or that piece of wood which is driven into the eye of the nether millstone, for the purpose of keeping the spindle steady in passing through the upper stone. He also stopped up the spout through which the meal discharged itself ; and as the mill was one of those old-fashioned machines, where the water-wheel moved horizontally, and directly under the stones, it follows that, by this arrangement of things, the corn would fall into the stream. Having made these preparations, the miller locked his house door, and went to bed.

About midnight, Donald arrived with his people, and some sacks of dry corn, and finding everything, as he thought, in good order in the mill, he filled the hopper, and let on the water. The machinery revolved with more than ordinary rapidity ; the grain sank fast in the hopper ; but not a particle of it came out at the place where he was wont to receive it into his bag as meal. Donald the Proud and his "gillies" were all aghast. frantic with rage, he and they ran up and down ; and, in their hurry to do everything, they succeeded in doing nothing. At length Donald perceived, what even the obscurity of the night could not hide, a long white line of fair provender flowing down the middle of the stream, that left not a doubt as to where his corn was discharging itself. But he could neither guess how this strange phenomenon was produced, nor how the evil was to be cured. After much perplexity, he thought of turning off the water. But here the wily miller had also been prepared for him, having so contrived matters,

that the pole, or handle connecting the sluice with the inside of the mill, had fallen off as soon as the water was let on the wheel. Baffled at all points, Donald was compelled at last to run to the miller's house. Finding the door locked, he knocked and bawled loudly at the window ; and, on the miller demanding to know who was there, he did his best to explain, in broken English, the whole circumstances of the case. The miller heard him to an end ; and turning himself in his bed, he coolly replied, "strong is the hand of God !" Donald Unasach gnashed his teeth, tried the door again, returned to the window, and, humbled by the circumstances, repeated his explanation and entreaties for help. " *Te meal toun te purn to teil! hoigh, hoigh!*" " I thought ye had been ower weel practeesed in the business to let ony sic mischanter come ower ye, Donald," replied the imper-
turbable lowlander ; " but, you know,

'strong is the hand of God !'" The mountaineer now lost all patience. Drawing his dirk, and driving it through the window, he began to strike it so violently against the stones on the outside of the wall, that he illuminated the house with a shower of fire, that showed the terrified inmates the ferocious countenance of him who wielded the weapon. " *Te meal to te mill, te mutter to te mailler,*" sputtered out Donald, in the midst of his wrath, meaning to imply, that if the miller would only come and help him, he should have all his dues in future. Partly moved by this promise, but still more by his well-grounded fears, the miller arose at last, put the mill to rights, and ground the rest of the corn. And tradition tells us that after this the mill-dues were regularly paid, and the greatest harmony subsisted between Donald Unasach and the miller of Glenquoich.

BENJIE'S CHRISTENING.

BY D. M. MOIR.

We'll hap and row, hap and row,
We'll hap and row the feetic o't;
It is a wee bit weary thing,
I dinnie bide the greetie o't.—PROVOST CREECH.

An honest man, close button'd to the chin,
Broad-cloth without, and a warm heart within.—COWPER.

This great globe and all that it inherits shall dissolve,
And, like the baseless fabric of a vision,
Leave not a rack behind !—SHAKSPEARE.

AT the christening of our only bairn, Benjie, two or three remarkable circumstances occurred, which it behoves me to relate. It was on a cold November afternoon ; and really when the bit room was all redd up, the fire bleezing away, and the candles lighted, every thing looked full tosh and comfortable.

It was a real pleasure, after looking out into the drift that was fleeing like mad from the east, to turn one's neb inwards, and think that we had a civilised home to comfort us in the dreary season. So, one after another, the bit party we had invited to the ceremony came papping in ; and the

crack began to get loud and hearty ; for, to speak the truth, we were blessed with canny friends and a good neighbourhood. Notwithstanding, it was very curious that I had no mind of asking down James Batter, the weaver, honest man, though he was one of our own elders ; and in papped James, just when the company had haflins met, with his stocking-sleeves on his arms, his nightcap on his head, and his blue-stained apron hanging down before him, to light his pipe at our fire.

James, when he saw his mistake, was fain to retreat ; but we would not hear tell of it, till he came in, and took a dram out of the bottle, as we told him the not doing so would spoil the wean's beauty, which is an old freak (the smallpox, however, afterwards did that) ; so, with much persuasion, he took a chair for a gliff, and began with some of his drolls—for he is a clever, humour-some man, as ye ever met with. But he had not got faron with his jests, when lo ! a rap came to the door, and Mysie whipped away the bottle under her apron, saying, “ Wheesht, wheesht, for the sake of gudeness—there's the minister !”

This room had only one door, and James mistook it, running his head, for lack of knowledge, into the open closet, just as the minister lifted the outer-door sneck. We were all now sitting on nettles, for we were frightened that James would be seized with a cough, for he was a wee asthmatic ; or that some, knowing there was a thief in the pantry, might hurt good manners by breaking out into a giggle. However, all for a considerable time was quiet, and the ceremony was performed ; little Nancy, our niece, handing the bairn upon my arm to receive its name. So we thought, as the minister seldom made a long stay on similar occasions, that all would pass off well enough. But wait a wee.

There was but one of our company that had not cast up, to wit, Deacon

Paunch, the flesher, a most worthy man, but tremendously big, and grown to the very heels ; as was once seen on a wager, that his ankle was greater than my brans. It was really a pain to all feeling Christians, to see the worthy man waighling about, being, when weighed in his own scales, two-and-twenty stone ten ounces, Dutch weight. Honest man, he had had a sore fecht with the wind and sleet, and he came in with a shawl roppined round his neck, peching like a broken-winded horse ; so fain was he to find a rest for his weary carcass in our stuffed chintz pattern elbow-chair by the fire-cheek.

From the southing of wind at the window, and the rattling in the lum, it was clear to all manner of comprehension, that the night was a dismal one ; so the minister, seeing so many of his own douce folk about him, thought he might do worse than volunteer to sit still and try our toddy ; indeed, we would have pressed him before this to do so, but what was to come of James Batter, who was shut up in the closet, like the spies in the house of Rahab the harlot, in the city of Jericho ?

James began to find it was a bad business ; and having been driving the shuttle about from before daylight, he was fain to crook his hough, and felt round about him quietly in the dark for a chair to sit down upon, since better might not be. But, wae's me ! the cat was soon out of the pock.

Me and the minister were just argle-bargling some few words on the doctrine of the camel and the eye of the needle, when, in the midst of our discourse, as all was wheesht and attentive, an awful thud was heard in the closet, which gave the minister, who thought the house had fallen down, such a start, that his very wig loup'd for a full three-eights off his crown. I say we were needcessitated to let the cat out of the pock for two reasons : firstly, because we did not know what had happened ; and,

secondly, to quiet the minister's fears, decent man, for he was a wee nervous. So we made a hearty laugh of it, as well as we could, and opened the door to bid James Batter come out, as we confessed all. Easier said than done, howsoever. When we pulled open the door, and took forward one of the candles, there was James doubled up, sticking twofold, like a rotten in a sneck-trap, in an old chair, the bottom of which had gone down before him, and which, for some craze about it, had been put out of the way by Nanse, that no accident might happen. Save us! if the deacon had sate down upon it, pity on our brick-floor!

Well, after some ado, we got James, who was more frightened than hurt, hauled out of his hidy-hole; and after lifting off his cowl, and sleeking down his front hair, he took a seat beside us, apologeizing for not being in his Sunday's garb, the which the minister, who was a free and easy man, declared there was no occasion for, and begged him to make himself comfortable.

Well, passing over that business, Mr Wiggie and me entered into our humours, for the drappikie was beginning to tell on my noddle, and made me somewhat venturesome—not to say that I was not a little proud to have the minister in my bit housie; so, says I to him in a cosh way, "Ye may believe me or no, Mr Wiggie, but mair than me think ye out of sight the best preacher in the parish; name of them, Mr Wiggie, can hold the candle to ye, man."

"Wheesht, wheesht," said the body, in rather a cold way that I did not expect, knowing him to be as proud as a peacock—"I daresay I am just like my neighbours."

This was not quite so kind—so says I to him, "Maybe sae, for many a one thinks ye could not hold a candle to Mr Blowster the Cameronian, that whiles preaches at Lugton."

This was a stramp on his corny toe.

"Na, na," answered Mr Wiggie, rather nettled; "let us drop that subject. I preach like my neighbours. Some of them may be worse, and others better; just as some of your own trade may make clothes worse, and some better, than yourself."

My corruption was raised. "I deny that," said I, in a brisk manner, which I was sorry for after—"I deny that, Mr Wiggie," says I to him; "I'll make a pair of breeches with the face of clay."

But this was only a passing breeze, during the which, howsoever, I happened to swallow my thimble, which accidentally slipped off my middle finger, causing both me and the company general alarm, as there were great fears that it might mortify in the stomach; but it did not; and neither word nor wittens of it have been seen or heard tell of from that to this day. So, in two or three minutes, we had some few good songs, and a round of Scotch proverbs, when the clock chapped eleven. We were all getting, I must confess, a thought noisy; Johnny Souter having broken a dram-glass, and Willie Fegs couped a bottle on the bit table-cloth: all noisy, I say, except Deacon Paunch, douce man, who had fallen into a pleasant slumber; so, when the minister rose to take his hat, they all rose except the deacon, whom we shook by the arms for some time, but in vain, to waken him. His round, oily face, good creature, was just as if it had been cut out of a big turnip, it was so fat, fozy, and soft; but at last, after some ado, we succeeded, and he looked about him with a wild stare, opening his two red eyes, like Pandore oysters, asking what had happened; and we got him hoized up on his legs, tying the blue shawl round his bull-neck again.

Our company had not got well out of the door, and I was priding myself in my heart about being landlord to such

a goodly turn out, when Nanse took me by the arm, and said, "Come, and see such an unearthly sight." This startled me, and I hesitated ; but at long and last I went in with her, a thought alarmed at what had happened, and—my gracious ! there, on the easy-chair, was our bonny tortoise-shell cat, Tommy, with the red morocco collar about its

neck, bruised as flat as a flounder, and as dead as a mawk !

The deacon had sat down upon it without thinking ; and the poor animal, that our neighbours' bairns used to play with, and be so fond of, was crushed out of life without a cheep. The thing, doubtless, was not intended, but it gave Nanse and me a very sore heart.

THE MINISTER'S WIDOW.

BY PROFESSOR WILSON.

THE dwelling of the minister's widow stood within a few miles of the beautiful village of Castle-Holm, about a hundred low-roofed houses that had taken the name of the parish of which they were the little romantic capital. Two small regular rows of cottages faced each other, on the gentle acclivity of a hill, separated by a broomy common of rich pasturage, through which hurried a translucent loch-born rivulet, with here and there its shelves and waterfalls overhung by the alder or weeping birch. Each straw-roofed abode, snug and merry as a beehive, had behind it a few rods of garden ground ; so that, in spring, the village was covered with a fragrant cloud of blossoms on the pear, apple, and plum trees ; and in autumn was brightened with golden fruitage. In the heart of the village stood the manse, and in it had she who was now a widow passed twenty years of privacy and peace. On the death of her husband, she had retired with her family—three boys—to the pleasant cottage which they now inhabited. It belonged to the old lady of the castle, who was patroness of the parish, and who accepted from the minister's widow of a mere trifle as a nominal rent. On approaching the village, strangers always fixed

upon Sunnyside for the manse itself, for an air of serenity and retirement brooded over it, as it looked out from below its sheltering elms, and the farm-yard with its corn-stack, marking the homestead of the agricultural tenant, was there wanting. A neat gravel-walk winded away, without a weed, from the white gate by the roadside, through lilacs and laburnums ; and the unruffled and unbroken order of all the breathing things that grew around, told that a quiet and probably small family lived within those beautiful boundaries.

The change from the manse to Sunnyside had been with the widow a change from happiness to resignation. Her husband had died of a consumption ; and for nearly a year she had known that his death was inevitable. Both of them had lived in the spirit of that Christianity which he had preached ; and therefore the last year they passed together, in spite of the many bitter tears which she who was to be the survivor shed when none were by to see, was perhaps on the whole the best deserving of the name of happiness of the twenty that had passed over their earthly union. To the dying man Death had lost all his terrors. He sat beside his wife, with his bright hollow

eyes and emaciated frame, among the balmy shades of his garden, and spoke with fervour of the many tender mercies God had vouchsafed to them here, and of the promises made to all who believed in the Gospel. They did not sit together to persuade, to convince, or to uphold each other's faith, for they believed in the things that were unseen, just as they believed in the beautiful blossomed arbour that then contained them in its shading silence. Accordingly, when the hour was at hand in which he was to render up his spirit into the hand of God, he was like a grateful and wearied man falling into a sleep. His widow closed his eyes with her own hands, nor was her soul then disquieted within her. In a few days she heard the bell tolling, and from her sheltered window looked out, and followed the funeral with streaming eyes, but an unweeping heart. With a calm countenance and humble voice she left and bade farewell to the sweet manse, where she had so long been happy; and as her three beautiful boys, with faces dimmed by natural grief, but brightened by natural gladness, glided before her steps, she shut the gate of her new dwelling with an undisturbed soul, and moved her lips in silent thanksgiving to the God of the fatherless and the widow.

Her three boys, each one year older than the other, grew in strength and beauty, the pride and flower of the parish. In school they were quiet and composed; but in play-hours they bounded in their glee together like young deer, and led the sportful flock in all their excursions through wood or over moor. They resembled, in features and in voice, both of their gentle parents; but nature had moulded to quite another character their joyful and impetuous souls. When sitting or walking with their mother, they subdued their spirits down to suit her equable and gentle contentment, and behaved towards her with a delicacy and thoughtfulness

which made her heart to sing for joy. So, too, did they sit in the kirk on Sabbath, and during all that day the fountain of their joy seemed to subside and to lie still. They knew to stand solemnly with their mother, now and then on the calm summer evenings, beside their father's grave. They remembered well his pale kind face—his feeble walk—his bending frame—his hand laid in blessing on their young heads—and the last time they ever heard him speak. The glad boys had not forgotten their father; and that they proved by their piety unto her whom most on earth had their father loved. But their veins were filled with youth, health, and the electricity of joy; and they carried without and within the house such countenances as at any time coming upon their mother's eyes on a sudden, were like a torch held up in the dim melancholy of a mist, diffusing cheerfulness and elevation.

Years passed on. Although the youngest was but a boy, the eldest stood on the verge of manhood, for he had entered his seventeenth year, and was bold, straight, and tall, with a voice deepening in its tone, a graver expression round the gladness of his eyes, and a sullen mass of coal-black hair hanging over the smooth whiteness of his open forehead. But why describe the three beautiful brothers? They knew that there was a world lying at a distance that called upon them to leave the fields, and woods, and streams, and lochs of Castle-Holm; and, born and bred in peace as they had been, their restless hearts were yet all on fire, and they burned to join a life of danger, strife, and tumult. No doubt it gave their mother a sad heart to think that all her three boys, who she knew loved her so tenderly, could leave her alone, and rush into the far-off world. But who shall curb nature? Who ought to try to curb it when its bent is strong? She reasoned a while, and tried to dissuade;

but it was in vain. Then she applied to her friends ; and the widow of the minister of Castle-Holm, retired as his life had been, was not without friends of rank and power. In one year her three boys had their wish ;—in one year they left Sunnyside, one after the other ; William to India, Edward to Spain, and Harry to a man-of-war.

Still was the widow happy. The house that so often used to be ringing with joy, was now indeed too, too silent ; and that utter noiselessness sometimes made her heart sick, when sitting by herself in the solitary room. But by nature she was a gentle, meek, resigned, and happy being ; and had she even been otherwise, the sorrow she had suffered, and the spirit of religion which her whole life had instilled, must have reconciled her to what was now her lot. Great cause had she to be glad. Far away as India was, and seemingly more remote in her imagination, loving letters came from her son there in almost every ship that sailed for Britain ; and if at times something delayed them, she came to believe in the necessity of such delays, and, without quaking, waited till the blessed letter did in truth appear. Of Edward, in Spain, she often heard—though for him she suffered more than for the others. Not that she loved him better, for, like three stars, each possessed alike the calm heaven of her heart ; but he was with Wellington, and the regiment in which he served seemed to be conspicuous in all skirmishes, and in every battle. Henry, her youngest boy, who left her before he had finished his fourteenth year, she often heard from ; his ship sometimes put into port ; and once, to the terror and consternation of her loving and yearning heart, the young midshipman stood before her, with a laughing voice, on the floor of the parlour, and rushed into her arms. He had got leave of absence for a fortnight ; and proudly, although sadly too, did she look

on her dear boy when he was sitting in the kirk with his uniform on, and his war-weapons by his side—a fearless and beautiful stripling, on whom many an eye was insensibly turned even during service. And, to be sure, when the congregation were dismissed, and the young sailor came smiling out into the churchyard, never was there such a shaking of hands seen before. The old men blessed the gallant boy ; many of the mothers looked at him not without tears ; and the young maidens, who had heard that he had been in a bloody engagement, and once nearly shipwrecked, gazed upon him with unconscious blushes, and bosoms that beat with innocent emotion. A blessed week it was indeed that he was then with his mother ; and never before had Sunnyside seemed so well to deserve its name.

To love, to fear, and to obey God, was the rule of this widow's life ; and the time was near at hand when she was to be called upon to practise it in every silent, secret, darkest corner and recess of her afflicted spirit. Her eldest son, William, fell in storming a fort in India, as he led the forlorn-hope. He was killed dead in a moment, and fell into the trench with all his lofty plumes. Edward was found dead at Talavera, with the colours of his regiment tied round his body. And the ship in which Henry was on board, that never would have struck her flag to any human power sailing on the sea, was driven by a storm on a reef of rocks, went to pieces during the night, and of eight hundred men, not fifty were saved. Of that number Henry was not ; but his body was found next day on the sand, along with those of many of the crew, and buried, as it deserved, with all honours, and in a place where few but sailors slept.

In one month—one little month—did the tidings of the three deaths reach Sunnyside. A government letter in-

formed her of William's death in India, and added, that, on account of the distinguished character of the young soldier, a small pension would be settled on his mother. Had she been starving of want instead of blessed with competence, that word would have had then no meaning to her ear. Yet true it is, that a human—an earthly—pride cannot be utterly extinguished, even by severest anguish, in a mother's heart, yea, even although her best hopes are garnered up in heaven; and the weeping widow could not help feeling it now, when, with the black wax below her eyes, she read how her dead boy had not fallen in the service of an ungrateful state. A few days afterwards a letter came from himself, written in the highest spirits and tenderest affection. His mother looked at every word—every letter—every dash of the pen;—and still one thought—one thought only, was in her soul;—"the living hand that traced these lines—where, what is it now?" But this was the first blow only; ere the new moon was visible, the widow knew that she was altogether childless.

It was in a winter hurricane that her youngest boy had perished; and the names of those whose health had hitherto been remembered at every festal Christmas, throughout all the parish, from the castle to the humblest hut, were now either suppressed within the heart, or pronounced with a low voice and a sigh. During three months, Sunnyside looked almost as if uninhabited. Yet the smoke from one chimney told that the childless widow was sitting alone at her fireside; and when her only servant was spoken to at church, or on the village-green, and asked how her mistress was bearing these dispensations, the answer was, that her health seemed little, if at all impaired, and that she talked of coming to divine service in a few weeks, if her strength would permit. She had been

seen through the leafless hedge standing at the parlour window, and had motioned with her hand to a neighbour, who in passing, had uncovered his head. Her weekly bounty to several poor and bed-ridden persons had never suffered but one week's intermission. It was always sent to them on Saturday night; and it was on a Saturday night that all the parish had been thrown into tears, with the news that Henry's ship had been wrecked, and the brave boy drowned. On that evening she had forgotten the poor.

But now the Spring had put forth her tender buds and blossoms—had strewn the black ground under the shrubs with flowers, and was bringing up the soft, tender, and beautiful green over the awakening face of the earth. There was a revival of the spirit of life and gladness over the garden, and the one encircling field of Sunnyside; and so likewise, under the grace of God, was there a revival of the soul that had been sorrowing within its concealment. On the first sweet dewy Sabbath of May, the widow was seen closing behind her the little white gate, which for some months her hand had not touched. She gave a gracious, but mournful smile, to all her friends, as she passed on through the midst of them along with the minister who had joined her on entering the churchyard; and although it was observed that she turned pale as she sat down in her pew, with the Bibles and Psalm-books that had belonged to her sons lying before her, as they themselves had enjoined when they went away, yet her face brightened even as her heart began to burn within her at the simple music of the psalm. The prayers of the congregation had some months before been requested for her, as a person in great distress; and, during service, the young minister, according to her desire, now said a few simple words, that intimated to the congregation that the childless widow was, through his lips,

returning thanks to Almighty God, for that He had not forsaken her in her trouble, but sent resignation and peace.

From that day she was seen, as before, in her house, in her garden, along the many pleasant walks all about the village ; and in the summer evenings, though not so often as formerly, in the dwellings of her friends, both high and low. From her presence a more gentle manner seemed to be breathed over the rude, and a more heartfelt delicacy over the refined. Few had suffered as she had suffered ; all her losses were such as could be understood, felt, and wept over by all hearts ; and all boisterousness or levity of joy would have seemed an outrage on her, who, sad and melancholy herself, yet wished all around her happy, and often lighted up her countenance with a grateful smile at the sight of that pleasure which she could not but observe to be softened, sobered, and subdued for her sake.

Such was the account of her, her sorrow, and her resignation, which I received on the first visit I paid to a family near Castle-Holm, after the final consummation of her grief. Well-known to me had all the dear boys been ; their father and mine had been labourers in the same vineyard ; and as I had always been a welcome visitor, when a boy, at the manse of Castle-Holm, so had I been, when a man, at Sunnyside. Last time I had been there, it was during the holidays, and I had accompanied the three boys on their fishing excursions to the lochs in the moor ; and in the evenings pursued with them their humble and useful studies. So I could not leave Castle-Holm without visiting Sunnyside, although my heart misgave me, and I wished I could have delayed it till another summer.

I sent word that I was coming to see her, and I found her sitting in that well-known little parlour where I had partaken the pleasure of so many merry

evenings with those whose laughter was now extinguished. We sat for awhile together speaking of ordinary topics, and then utterly silent. But the restraint she had imposed upon herself she either thought unnecessary any longer, or felt it to be impossible ; and rising up, went to a little desk, from which she brought forth three miniatures, and laid them down upon the table before us, saying, “Behold the faces of my three dead boys !”

So bright, breathing, and alive did they appear, that for a moment I felt impelled to speak to them, and to whisper their names. She beheld my emotion, and said unto me, “Oh ! could you believe that they are all dead ? Does not that smile on Willie’s face seem as if it were immortal ? do not Edward’s sparkling eyes look so bright as if the mists of death could never have overshadowed them ? and think—oh ! think, that ever Henry’s golden hair should have been dragged in the brine, and filled full—full, I doubt not, of the soiling sand !”

I put the senseless images one by one to my lips, and kissed their foreheads—for dearly had I loved these three brothers ; and then I shut them up and removed them to another part of the room. I wished to speak, but I could not ; and, looking on the face of her who was before me, I knew that her grief would find utterance, and that not until she had unburdened her heart could it be restored to repose.

“They would tell you, sir, that I bear my trials well ; but it is not so. Many, many unresigned and ungrateful tears has my God to forgive in me, a poor, weak, and repining worm. Almost every day, almost every night, do I weep before these silent and beautiful phantoms ; and when I wipe away the breath and mist of tears from their faces, there are they, smiling continually upon me ! Oh ! death is a shocking thought, when it is linked in love with creatures

so young as these ! More insupportable is gushing tenderness, than even dry despair ; and, methinks, I could bear to live without them, and never to see them more, if I could only cease to pity them ! But that can never be. It is for them I weep, not for myself. If they were to be restored to life, would I not lie down with thankfulness into the grave ? William and Edward were struck down, and died, as they thought, in glory and triumph. Death to them was merciful. But who can know, although they may try to dream of it in horror, what the youngest of them, my sweet Harry, suffered, through that long dark howling night of snow, when the ship was going to pieces on the rocks ! ”

That last dismal thought held her for a while silent ; and some tears stood in drops on her eyelashes, but seemed again to be absorbed. Her heart appeared unable to cling to the horrors of the shipwreck, although it coveted them ; and her thoughts reverted to other objects. “ I walk often into the rooms where they used to sleep, and look on their beds till I think I see their faces lying with shut eyes on their pillows. Early in the morning do I often think I hear them singing ; I awaken from troubled unrest, as if the knock of their sportive hands were at my door summoning me to rise. All their stated hours of study and of play, when they went to school and returned from it, when they came into meals, when they said their prayers, when they went leaping at night to bed as lightsomely, after all the day’s fatigue, as if they had just risen—oh ! Sir, at all these times, and many, and many a time besides these, do I think of them whom you loved.”

While thus she kept indulging the passion of her grief, she observed the tears I could no longer conceal ; and the sight of my sorrow seemed to give, for a time, a loftier character to hers, as if my weakness made her aware of

her own, and she had become conscious of the character of her vain lamentations. “ Yet, why should I so bitterly weep ? Pain had not troubled them—passion had not disturbed them—vice had not polluted them. May I not say, ‘ My children are in heaven with their father,’ —and ought I not, therefore, to dry up all these foolish tears now and for evermore ? ”

Composure was suddenly shed over her countenance, like gentle sunlight over a cheerless day, and she looked around the room as if searching for some pleasant objects that eluded her sight. “ See,” said she, “ yonder are all their books, arranged just as Henry arranged them on his unexpected visit. Alas ! too many of them are about the troubles and battles of the sea ! But it matters not now. You are looking at that drawing. It was done by himself—that is the ship he was so proud of, sailing in sunshine and a pleasant breeze. Another ship, indeed, was she soon after, when she lay upon the reef ! But as for the books, I take them out of their places, and dust them, and return them to their places, every week. I used to read to my boys, sitting round my knees, out of many of these books, before they could read themselves ; but now I never peruse them, for their cheerful stories are not for me. But there is one Book I do read, and without it I should long ago have been dead. The more the heart suffers, the more does it understand that Book. Never do I read a single chapter, without feeling assured of something more awful in our nature than I felt before. My own heart misgives me ; my own soul betrays me ; all my comforts desert me in a panic ; but never yet once did I read one whole page of the New Testament that I did not know that the eye of God is on all His creatures, and on me like the rest, though my husband and all my sons are dead, and I may have many years yet to live alone on the earth.”

After this we walked out into the little avenue, now dark with the deep rich shadows of summer beauty. We looked at that beauty, and spoke of the surpassing brightness of the weather during all June, and advancing July. It is not in nature always to be sad ; and the remembrance of all her melancholy and even miserable confessions was now like an uncertain echo, as I beheld a placid smile on her face, a smile of such perfect resignation, that it might not falsely be called a smile of joy. We stood at the little white gate ; and, with

a gentle voice, that perfectly accorded with that expression, she bade God bless me ; and then with composed steps, and now and then turning up, as she walked along, the massy flower-branches of the laburnum, as, bent with their load of beauty, they trailed upon the ground, she disappeared into that retirement which, notwithstanding all I had seen and heard, I could not but think deserved almost to be called happy, in a world which even the most thoughtless know is a world of sorrow.

THE BATTLE OF THE BREEKS :

A PASSAGE IN THE LIFE OF WILLIAM M'GEE, WEAVER IN HAMILTON.

BY ROBERT MACNISH, LL.D.

I OFTEN wonder when I think of the tribulations that men bring upon themselves, through a want of gumption and common independence of speerit. There now was I, for nae less than eighteen years, as henpeckita man as ever wrocht at the loom. Maggie and me, after the first week of our marriage, never forgathered weel thegither. There was something unco dour and imperious about her temper, although, I maun say, barring this drawback, she was nae that ill in her way either,—that is to say, she had a sort of kindness about her, and behaved in a truly mitherly way to the bairns, giein them a' things needfu' in the way of feeding and claithing, so far as our means admitted. But, oh, man, for a' that, she was a dour wife. There was nae pleasing her ae way or anither ; and whenever I heard the bell ringing for the kirk, it put me in mind of her tongue—aye wag, wagging, and abusing me beyond bounds. In ae word, I was a puir,

broken-hearted man, and often wished myself in Abraham's bosom, awa frae the cares and miseries of this sinfu' world.

I was just saying that folk often rin their heads into scrapes for want of a pickle natural spunk. Let nae man tell me that gude nature and simpleecity will get on best in this world ; na—faith na. I hae had ower muckle experience that way ; and the langer I live has proved to me that my auld maister, James Currie (him in the Quarry Loan), wasna sae far wrang when he alleged, in his droll, gude-humoured way, that a man should hae enough o' the deil about him to keep the deil frae him. That was, after a', ane of the wisest observes I hae heard of for a lang time. Little did I opine that I would ever be obligated to mak use o't in my ain particular case :—but, bide a wee, and ye shall see how it was brocht about between me and Maggie.

It was on a wintry night when she

set out to pick a quarrel wi' Mrs Todd, the huckster's wife, anent the price of a pickle flour which I had bought some days before, for making batter of, but which didna turn out sae weel as I expeckit, considering what was paid for't. Had I been consulted, I would hae tellt her to bide at hame, and no fash her thumb about the matter, which after a' was only an affair of three-ha'pence farthing, and neither here nor there. But, na; Maggie was nane o' the kind to let sic an object stan' by; so out she sets, wi' her red cloak about her, and her black velvet bonnet—that she had just that day got hame frae Miss Lorimer, the milliner—upon her head. Bnt I maun first tell what passed between her and me on this wonderful occasion.

"And now, my dear," quo' I, looking as couthy and humble as I could, and pu'ing my Kilmarnock nicht-cap a wee grain aff my brow in a kind of half respectfu' fashion, "what's this ye're ganging to be about? Odds, woman, I wadna gie a pирn for a' that has hapened. What signifies a pickle flour, scrimp worth half a groat?"

Faith, I would better hae held my tongue, for nae sooner was the word uttered, than takin' haud of a can, half fu' o' ready-made dressing, which I was preparing to lay on a wab of blue check I was working for Mr Andrew Treddles, the Glasgow manufacturer—I say, taking haud of this, she let flee at my head like a cannon-ball. But Providence was kind, and instead of knocking out my brains, as I had every reason to expeck, it gaed bang against our ain looking-glass, and shattered it into five hunder pieces. But I didna a'thegither escape scaith—the dressing having flown out as the can gaed by me, and plaistered a' my face ower in a manner maist extraordinar to behold. By jingo! my spirit was roused at this deadly attempt, and gin she hadna been my wife, I wad hae thrawn about

her neck, like a tappit-hen's. But, na—I was henpeckit, and she had sic a mastery ower me as nae persuasions of my ain judgment could owercome. Sae I could do naething but stan' glowering at her like a moudiewart, while she poured out as much abuse as if I had been her flunkey, instead of her natural lord and master. Ance or twice I fand my nieves yeuking to gie her a clour by way of balancing accounts, but such was the power of influence she had obtained, that I durstna cheep for my very heart's blude. So awa she gaed on her errand, leaving me sittin' by the fire to mak the best of my desperate condition.

"O, Nancy," said I to my dochter, as she sat mending her brither's sark, opposite to me, "is na your mither an awfu' woman?"

"I see naething awfu' about her," quo' the cratur; "I think she servit ye richt; and had I a man, I would just treat him in the same way, if he daured to set his nose against onything I wanted."

I declare to ye, when I heard this frae my ain flesh and blude, I was perfectly dumfounded. The bairn I had brought up on my knee—that used, when a wee thing, to come and sit beside me at the loom, and who was in the custom of wheeling my pirns wi' her ain hand—odds, man, it was desperate. I couldna say another word, but I faund a big tear come hap-happening ower my runkled cheeks, the first that had wet them sin' I was a bit laddie rinnin' about before the schule door. What was her mither's abusiveness to this? A man may thole muchle frae his wife, but, oh, the harsh words of an undutifull bairn gang like arrows to his heart, and he weeps tears of real bitterness. I wasna angry at the lassie—I was ower grieved to be angered; and for the first time I fand that my former sufferings were only as a single thread to a hale hank of yarn, compared to them I suffered at this moment.

A'thegither, the thing was mair than I could stand, so rising up, I betaks mysel to my but-an-ben neighbour, Andrew Brand. Andrew was an uncommon sagacious chiel, and, like mysel, a weaver to his trade. He was beuklearned, and had read a hantle on different subjects, so that he was naturally looked up to by the folks round about, on account of his great lear. When onything gaed wrang about the Leechlee Street, where we lived, we were a' glad to consult him ; and his advice was reckoned no greatly behint that of Mr Meek, the minister. He was a great counter, or 'rithmetishian, as he ca'd it ; and it was thocht by mony gude judges that he could handle a pen as weel as Mr Dick, the writing-master, himsel. So, as I was saying, I stappit ben to Andrew's, to ask his advice, but, odds ! if ye ever saw a man in sic a desperate passion as he was in when I tauld him how I had been used by my wife and dochter.

"William M'Gee," said he, raising his voice,—it was a geyan strong ane,—"ye're an absolute gomeril. Oh, man, but ye're a henpeckit sumph ! I tell ye, ye're a gawpus and a lauching-stock, and no worth the name of a man. Do ye hear that ?"

"O ay, I hear't very weel," quo' I, no that pleased at being sae spoken to, even by Andrew Brand, who was a man I could stomach a gude deal frae, in the way of reproof—"I hear't a' weel eneuch, and am muckle obleeged to ye, nae doubt, for your consolation."

"Hooly and fairly, William," said he in a kinder tone, for he saw I was a degree hurt by his speech. "Come, I was only joking ye, man, and ye maunna tak onything amiss I hae said. But, really, William, I speak to ye as a frien', and tell ye that ye are submitting to a tyranny which no man of common understanding ought to submit to. Is this no the land of liberty ? Are we no just as free as the Duke in his grand

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palace down by ; and has onybody a richt—tell me that, William M'Gee—to tyranneze ower anither as your wife does ower you ! I'll no tell ye what to do, but I'll just tell ye what I would do if my wife and dochter treated me as yours have treated you : losh, man, I would ding their harns about, and knock their heads thegither like twa curling-stanes. I would aye be master in my ain house."

This was Andrew's advice, and I thocht it sounded geyan rational, only no very easy to be put in practice. Hosomever, thinks I to mysel, I'll consider about it, and gin I could only bring mysel to mak the experiment, wha kens but I might succeed to a miracle ? On stapping back to my ain house, the first thing I did was to tak a thimblefu' of whisky, by way of gieing me a pickle spunk, in case of ony fresh rumpus wi' the wife, and also to clear up my ideas ; for I hae fand, that after a lang spell at the loom, the thochts, as weel as the body, are like to get stupid and dozey. So I taks a drappie, and sits down quietly by the fireside, waiting for the return of Maggie frae scolding Mrs Todd about the flour.

In she comes, a' in a flurry. Her face was as red as a peony rose, her breathing cam fast, and she lookit a'thegither like ane that has had a sair warsle wi' the tongue. But she was far frae being downcast. On the contrair, she lookit as proud as a Turkey cock ; and I saw wi' the tail o'my ee that she had gained a gran' victory ower puir Mrs Todd, who was a douce, quiet woman, and nae match for the like of her in randying. So she began to stump and mak a great phrase aboot the way she had outcrawed the puir body ; and was a'thegither as upset about it as if Duke Hamilton had made her keeper of his palace. Losh ! I was mad to hear't, and twa or three times had a gude mind to put in a word, to sic a

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degree was my courage raised by the drap speerits ; but aye as the words were rising to my mouth, the thocht of the can and the dressing sent them back again, till they stuck like a bane in my throat. Very likely I might hae said ne'er a word, and Andrew Brand's advice might haegane for naething, had it no been for the cratur Nancy, who was sae lifted up about her mither's dispute, that naething would sair her but to hae the hale affair mentioned cut and dry.

"And did ye cast up to Mrs Todd, mither," quo' the little cutty, "that she was fat?"

"Ay, that I did," said Maggie. "I tellt her she was like a barn-door. I tellt her she was like the side of a house. 'Ye're a sow,' quo' I ; 'ye get fou every hour of the day, wi' your lump of a gudeman !'"

But this wasna a'—for nae sooner had Maggie answered her dochter's first question, than the cratur was ready wi' anither : "And, mither, did ye cast up to her that her faither was a meeser?"

"Atweel did I, Nancy," answered the gudewife. "I tellt her a' that. I coost up to her that her faither was a meeser, and would ride to Lunnon on a louse, and mak breekis of its skin, and candles of its tallow."

I could thole this nae langer. I fand the hale man working within me, and was moved to a pitch of daring, mair like madness than onything else. Faith, the whisky was of gude service now, and so was Andrew Brand's advice. I accordingly stikit my nieves wi' desperation, threw awa my cowl, tucked up my sark sleeves,—for my coat happened to be aff at the time,—and got up frae the three-footed stool I had been sitting upon in the twinkling of an ee. I trumbled a' ower, but whether it was wi' fear, or wi' anger, or wi' baith put thegither, it would be difficult to say. I was in an awfu' passion, and as fairce as a papist.

"And so," said I, "ye coost up sic things to the honest woman, Mrs Todd ! O, Maggie M'Gee, Maggie M'Gee, are ye no ashamed of yoursel?"

"Od it would hae dune your heart gude to see how she glowered at me. She was bewildered, and lookit as if to see whether I was mysel, and no some ither body. But her evil speerit didna lie lang asleep ; it soon broke out like a squib on the king's birthday, and I saw that I maun now stand firm, or be a dead man for ever.

"Has your faither been at the whisky bottle?" said she to her dochter. "He looks as if he was the waur of drink."

"He had a glass just before ye cam in," answered the wicked jimpey ; and scarcely had she spoken the word, when Maggie flew upon me like a teeger, and gied me a skelp on the cheek wi' her open loaf, that made me turn round tapwise on the middle of the floor. Seeing that affairs were come to this pass, I saw plainly that I maun go on, no forgetting in sae doing my frien' Andrew's advice, as also my auld master Tammas Currie's observe, anent a man ha'ing aneuch of the deil in his temper to keep the deil awa frae him. So I picked up a' the spunk I had in me, besides what I had frae the drap whisky ; and fa'ing to, I gied her sic a leathering as never woman got in her born days. In ae word, she met wi' her match, and roared aloud for mercy ; but this I would on nae account grant, till she promised faithfully that, in a' time coming, she would acknowledge me as her lord and maister, and obey me in everything as a dutiful wife should her husband.

As soon as this was settled, in stappit Andrew Brand. At the sight of my wife greeting, and me sae fairce, he held up his hands wi' astonishment.

"William M'Gee," quo' he, "it's no possible that ye're maister in this house!"

"It's no only possible, but it's true,

Andrew," was my answer ; and, taking me by the hand, he wished me joy for my speerit and success.

Sae far, sae weel ; the first grand stroke was made, but there was something yet to do. I had discharged a' outstanding debts wi' my wife, and had brocht her to terms ; but I had yet to reduce my bairns to their senses, and show them that I was *their* lord and maister, as weel as their mither's. Puir things ! my heart was wae for them, for they were sairly miseducated, and held me in nae mair estimation, than if I had been ane of my ain wabster lads. So, just wi' a view to their gude, I took down a pair of teuch ben-leather taws, weel burnt at the finger-ends, and gied Nancy as mony cracks ower the bare neck, as set her squeeling beyond a' bounds. It was pitifu' to see the cratur, how she skipped about the room, and ran awa to her mither, to escape my faitherly rage. But a' assistance frae that quarter was at an end now ; and she was fain to fa' down on her knees, and beg my forgiveness, and promise to conduct hersel as became my dochter, in a' time coming.

Just at this moment, in comes wee Geordie, greeting for his parrisch. He kent naething of what had taken place in the house ; and, doubtless, expeckit to mak an idiot of me, his faither, as he had been accustomed to do, almost frae his very cradle. I saw that now was the time to thresh the corruption out of him ; and brandishing the taws ower my head, I made a stap forrit to lay hand upon him, and

treat him like the lave. He looked as if he had an inkling of what was forthcoming, and ran whinging and craiking to his mither, who stood wiping her een wi' her striped apron in a corner of the room. The terrified laddie clang to her knees, but she never offered to lend a helping hand, sae great was the salutary terror wi' which I had inspired her. So I pu'd him awa frae her coats, to which he was clinging ; and, laying him ower my knee, I gied him hipsie-dipsie in the presence of his mither, his sister, and Andrew Brand, who were looking on.

And thus hae I, who for eighteen years was ruled by my wife, got the upper hand ; and ony man who is hen-peckit as I hae been, should just tak the same plan, and his success will be as sure as mine. Andrew Brand aye said to me that a man should wear his ain breeks ; and I can maintain, frae present experience, that a wiser saying is no to be found in the Proverbs of Solomon, the son of David. No that Maggie hasna tried nows and thans to recover her lost power, but I hae on thae occasions conduckit mysel wi' sic firmness, that she has at last gien it up as a bad job, and is now as obedient a wife as ye'll meet wi' between this and Bothwell. The twa bairns, too, are just wonderfully changed, and are as raisonable as can be expeckit, a' things considered. Let men, therefore, whether gentle or simple, follow my plan, and the word "henpeckit," as Andrew Brand says, will soon slip out of the dictionair.

MY SISTER KATE.

BY ANDREW PICKEN.

THERE is a low road (but it is not much frequented, for it is terribly round about) that passes at the foot of the range of hills that skirt the long and beautiful gut or firth of the Clyde, in the west of Scotland ; and as you go along this road, either up or down, the sea or firth is almost at your very side, the hills rising above you ; and you are just opposite to the great black and blue mountains on the other side of the gut, that sweep in heavy masses, or jut out in bold capes, at the mouth of the deep lochs that run up the firth into the picturesque highlands of Argyleshire.

You may think of the scene what you please, because steam-boating has, of late years, profaned it somewhat into commonness, and defiled its pure air with filthy puffs of coal smoke ; and because the Comet and all her unfortunate passengers were sunk to the bottom of this very part of the firth ; and because, a little time previous, a whole boatful of poor Highland reaper girls were all run down in the night-time, while they were asleep, and drowned near the Clough lighthouse hard by ; but if you were to walk this road by the seaside any summer afternoon, going towards the bathing village of Gourock, you would say, as you looked across to the Highlands, and up the Clyde towards the rocks of Dumbarton Castle, that there are few scenes more truly magnificent and interesting.

There is a little village exactly opposite to you, looking across the firth, which is called Dunoon, and contains the burying-place of the great house of Argyle ; and which, surrounded by a patch of green cultivated land, sloping pleasantly from the sea, and cowering snugly by itself, with its

picturesque cemetery, under the great blue hills frowning behind, looks, from across the firth, absolutely like a tasteful little haunt of the capricious spirit of romance.

Well, between this road on the lowland side of the firth, and the water's-edge, and before it winds off round by the romantic seat of Sir Michael Shaw Stewart, farther up, there stand, or stood, two or three small fishing cottages which, from the hills nearly over them, looked just like white shells, of a large size, dropped fancifully down upon the green common between the hills and the road. In these cottages, it was observed, the fishermen had numerous families, who, while young, assisted them in their healthful employment ; and that the girls, of which there were a number, were so wild in their contented seclusion, that if any passenger on the road stopped to observe them, as they sat in groups on the green mending their father's nets, they would take alarm, and rise and run off like fawns, and hide among the rocks by the sea, or trip back into the cottages. Now it happened, once on a time, that a great event took place to one of the cottager's daughters, which, for a long period, deranged and almost destroyed the happy equality in which they had hitherto lived ; and becoming the theme of discourse and inquiry concerning things beyond the sphere of the fisher people and all their neighbours as far as Gourock, introduced among them no small degree of ambition and discontent.

There was one of the fishermen, a remarkably decent, well disposed Highlandman, from the opposite shore of Argyleshire, named Martin M'Leod, and he had two daughters, the youngest

of which, as was no uncommon case, turned out to be remarkably and even delicately beautiful.

But nobody ever saw or thought anything about the beauty of Catherine M'Leod, except it might be some of the growing young men in the neighbouring cottages, several of whom began, at times, to look at her with a sort of wonder, and seemed to feel a degree of awe in her company ; while her family took an involuntary pride in her beyond all the others ; and her eldest sister somehow imitated her in every thing, and continually quoted her talk, and trumpeted about among the neighbours what was said and done by "my sister Kate."

Things continued in this way as Kate grew to womankind ; and she was the liveliest little body about the place, and used to sing so divertingly at the house-end, as she busied herself about her father's fishing gear, and ran up and down "among the brekans on the brae," behind the cottages, or took her wanderings off all the way to the Clough lighthouse at the point. I say things continued in this way until a gentleman, who, it turned out, was all the way from London, came to lodge in Greenock, or Gourock, or Inverkip, or somewhere not very far distant ; and, being a gentleman, and, of course, at liberty to do every sort of out-of-the-way thing that he pleased, he got a manner of coming down and wandering about among the cottages, and asking questions concerning whatever he chose of the fishermen ; and then it was not long until he got his eyes upon Kate.

"The gentleman," as her sister used to tell afterwards, "was perfectly ill, and smitten at once about our Kate. He was not able," she said, "to take the least rest, but was down constantly about us for weeks ; and then he got to talking to and walking with Kate, she linking her arm in his beneath the hill, just as it had been Sir Michael Stewart

and my lady ; and then such presents as he used to bring for her, bought in the grand shop of Bailie Macnicol, at Greenock ; gowns, and shawls, and veils, and fine chip hats, never speaking of ribbons, and lace edging, and mob caps—perfectly beautiful."

The whole of the fishermen's daughters became mad with envy of poor Kate, and admiration of her new dress, which some said was mostly bought by her father after all, who wanted to have his daughter made a lady of ; and now nothing was heard in the hamlet but murmurings and discontented complaints ; every girl looking at herself in the little cracked glass that her father used to shave by, to see if she were pretty, and wishing and longing, not only for a lover of her own, but even for a gentleman. So, as matters grew serious, and the gentleman was fairly in love, old Martin M'Leod, who looked sharply after Kate, behoved to have sundry conversations with the gentleman about her ; and masters being appointed to teach her right things, which the fisher folks never heard of, but which were to turn her into a lady, Kate and the gentleman, after a time, were actually married in Greenock new church, and set off for London.

During all this time, there were various opinions among the fisher people, how that Kate never was particularly in love with the gentleman ; and some even said that she was in love with somebody else (for pretty maidens must always be in love), or, at least, that some of the youths of the neighbourhood were in love with her ; but then the old folks said, that love was only for gentle people who could afford to pay for it ; and that when a gentleman was pleased to fall in love, no one had a right to say him nay, or pretend to set up against him. Some of the young women, to be sure, ventured to contest this doctrine, and cited various cases from the authority of printed ballads

bought at the Greenock fair, at a half-penny each ; and also from the traditional literature of Argyleshire, which was couched in the mellifluous numbers of the Gaelic language ; but, however this might be, the fame of Catherine M'Leod's happy marriage and great fortune was noised abroad exceedingly, among the fisher people throughout these coasts, as well as about Gourock and all the parts adjacent.

As to the gentleman, it was found out that his name was Mr Pounteney, and that little Kate M'Leod was now Mrs Pounteney, and a great London lady, but what quality of a gentleman Mr Pounteney really was, was a matter of much controversy and discussion. Some said that he was a great gentleman, and others thought that, from various symptoms, he was not a very great gentleman ; some went so far as to say he was a lord or a prince, while others maintained that he was only a simple esquire.

Nothing, therefore, could be talked of wherever Flora M'Leod went, but about "my sister Kate ;" and she was quite in request everywhere, because she could talk of the romantic history and happy fortune of her lucky sister. Mrs Pounteney's house in London, therefore, Mrs Pounteney's grand husband, and Mrs Pounteney's coach, excited the admiration and the discontent of all the fishermen's daughters, for many miles round this romantic sea-coast, and these quiet cottages under the hills, where the simple people live upon their fish, and did not know that they were happy. Many a long summer's day, as the girls sat working their nets on a knoll towards the sea, the sun that shone warm upon their indolent limbs on the grass, and the breeze that blew from the firth, or swept round from the flowery woods of Ardgowan, seemed less grateful and delicious, from their discontented imaginings about the fortune of Mrs Pounteney ; and many a

sweet and wholesome supper of fresh boiled fish was made to lose its former relish, or was even embittered by obtrusive discourse about the fine wines and the gilded grandeur of "my sister Kate." Even the fisher lads in the neighbourhood—fine fearless youths—found a total alteration in their sweethearts ; their discourse was not relished, their persons were almost despised ; and there was now no happiness found for a fisherman's daughter, but what was at least to approach to the state of grandeur and felicity so fortunately obtained by "my sister Kate."

The minds of Kate's family were so carried by her great fortune, that vague wishes and discontented repinings followed their constant meditations upon her lucky lot. Flora had found herself above marrying a fisherman ; and a young fellow called Bryce Cameron, who had long waited for her, and whose brother, Allan, was once a sweetheart of Kate's herself, being long ago discarded ; and she, not perceiving any chances of a gentleman making his appearance to take Bryce's place, became melancholy and thoughtful ; she began to fear that she was to have nobody, and her thoughts ran constantly after London and Mrs Pounteney. With these anxious wishes, vague hopes began to mix of some lucky turn to her own fortune, if she were only in the way of getting to be a lady ; and at length she formed the high wish, and even the adventurous resolve, of going all the way to London, just to get one peep at her sister's happiness.

When this ambition seized Flora M'Leod, she let the old people have no rest, nor did she spare any exertion to get the means of making her proposed pilgrimage to London. In the course of a fortnight from its first serious suggestion, she, with a gold guinea in her pocket, and two one-pound notes of the Greenock Bank, besides other coins and valuables, and even a little

old-fashioned Highland brooch, with which the quondam lover of her sister, Allan Cameron, had the temerity to intrust to her, to be specially returned into the hand of the great lady when she should see her, besides a hundred other charges and remembrances from the neighbours, she set off one dewy morning in summer, carrying her shoes and stockings in her hand, to make her way to London, to get a sight of everything great, and particularly of her happy sister Kate.

Many a weary mile did Flora M'Leod walk, and ride, and sail, through unknown places, and in what she called foreign parts ; for strange things and people met her eye, and long dull regions of country passed her like a rapid vision, as she was wheeled towards the great capital, and proper centre of England. After travelling to a distance that was to her perfectly amazing, she was set down in London, and inquired her way, in the best English she could command, into one of those long brick streets, of dark and dull gentility, to which she was directed ; and after much trouble and some expense, at length found the door of her sister's house. She stood awhile considering, on the steps of the mansion, and felt a sort of fear of lifting the big iron knocker that seemed to grin down upon her ; for she was not in the habit of knocking at great folk's doors, and almost trembled lest somebody from within would frown her into nothing, even by their high and lofty looks.

And yet she thought the house was not so dreadfully grand after all ;—not at all such as she had imagined, for she had passed houses much bigger and grander than this great gentleman's ; it was not even the largest in its own street, and looked dull and dingy, and shut up with blinds and rails, having a sort of melancholy appearance.

But she must not linger, but see what was inside. . She lifted up the iron

knocker, and as it fell the very clang of it, and its echo inside, smote upon her heart with a sensation of strange apprehension. A powdered man opened it, and stared at her with an inquisitive and impertinent look, then saucily asked what she wanted. Flora courtesied low to the servant from perfect terror, saying she wanted to see Mrs Pounteney.

" And what can *you* want with Mrs Pounteney, young woman, I should like to know ? " said the fellow ; for Flora neither looked like a milliner's woman nor any other sort of useful person likely to be wanted by a lady.

Flora had laid various pretty plans in her own mind, about taking her sister by surprise, and seeing how she would look at her before she spoke, and so forth ; at least she had resolved not to affront her by making herself known as her sister before the servants ; but the man looked at her with such suspicion, and spoke so insolently, that she absolutely began to fear, from the interrogations of this fellow, that she would be refused admittance to her own sister, and was forced to explain and reveal herself before the outer door was fully opened to her. At length she was conducted, on tiptoe, along a passage, and then upstairs, until she was placed in a little back dressing-room. The servant then went into the drawing-room, where sat two ladies at opposite sides of the apartment, there to announce Flora's message.

On a sofa, near the window, sat a neat youthful figure, extremely elegantly formed, but *petite*, with a face that need not be described, further than that the features were small and pretty, and that, as a whole, it was rich in the nameless expression of simple beauty. Her dress could not have been plainer, to be of silk of the best sort ; but the languid discontent, if not melancholy, with which the female, yet quite in youth, gazed towards the window, or bent over a little silk netting with which she care-

lessly employed herself; seemed to any observer strange and unnatural at her time of life. At a table near the fire was seated a woman, almost the perfect contrast to this interesting figure, in the person of Mr Pounteney's eldest sister, a hard-faced, business-like person, who, with pen and ink before her, seemed busy among a parcel of household accounts, and the characteristic accompaniment of a bunch of keys occasionally rattling at her elbow.

The servant approached, as if fearful of being noticed by "the old one," as he was accustomed to call Miss Pounteney, and in a half whisper intimated to the little figure that a female wanted to see her.

"Eh! what!—what is it you say, John?" cried the lady among the papers, noticing this manœuvre of the servant.

"Nothing, Madam; it is a person that wants my lady."

"Your lady, sirrah; it must be me!—Eh! what!"

"No, Madam; she wants to see Mrs Pounteney particularly."

"Ah, John!" said the little lady on the sofa; "just refer her to Miss Pounteney. There is nobody can want me."

"Wants to see Mrs Pounteney particularly!" resumed the sister-in-law: "how dare you bring in such a message, sirrah? Mrs Pounteney particularly, indeed! Who is she, sirrah? Who comes here with such a message while I am in the house?"

"You must be mistaken, John," said the little lady sighing, who was once the lively Kate M'Leod of the fishing cottage in Scotland; "just let Miss Pounteney speak to her, you need not come to me."

"No, madam," said the servant, addressing Miss Pounteney, the natural pertness of his situation now returning to overcome his dread of "the old one." "This young person wants to

see my mistress directly, and I have put her into her dressing-room; pray, ma'am, go," he added, respectfully, to the listless Kate.

"Do you come here to give *your* orders, sirrah?" exclaimed Miss Pounteney, rising like a fury, and kicking the footstool half way across the room, "and to put strange people of your own accord into any dressing-room in this house! and to talk of *your* mistress, and wanting to speak to her directly, and privately, while *I* am here! I wonder what sister Becky would say, or Mr Pounteney, if he were at home!"

"Who is it, John? Do just bring her here, and put an end to this!" said Kate, imploringly, to the man.

"Madam," said John at last to his trembling mistress, "it is your sister!"

"Who, John?" cried Kate, starting to her feet; "my sister Flora—my own sister, from Clyde side! Speak, John, are you sure?"

"Yes, Madam, your sister from Scotland."

"Oh, where is she, where is she? Let me go!"

"No, no; you must be mistaken, John," said the lady with the keys, stepping forward to interrupt the anxious Kate. "John, this is all a mistake," she added, smoothly; "Mrs Pounteney has no sister! John, you may leave the room;" and she gave a determined look to the other sister, who stood astonished.

The moment the servant left the room, Miss Pounteney came forward, and stood in renewed rage over the fragile, melancholy Kate, and burst out with "What is this, Kate? Is it really possible, after what you know of my mind, and all our minds, that you have dared to bring your poor relations into my brother's house? That it is not enough that we are to have the disgrace of your mean connections, but we are to have your sisters and brothers to no end coming into the very house, and

sending up their beggarly names and designations by the very servants ! Kate, I must not permit this. I will not—I shall not ;” and she stamped with rage.

“ Oh, Miss Pounteney,” said Kate, with clasped hands, “ will you not let me go and see my sister ? Will you just let me go and weep on the neck of my poor Flora ? I will go to a private place—I will go to another house, if you please ; I will do anything when I return to you, if I ever return, for I care not if I never come into this unhappy house more ! ” and, uttering this, almost with a shriek, she burst past the two women, and ran through the rooms to seek her sister.

Meantime, Flora had sat so long waiting, without seeing her sister, that she began to feel intense anxiety ; and, fancying her little Kate wished to forget her, because she was poor, had worked herself up into a resolution of assumed coldness, when she heard a hurried step, and the door was instantly opened. Kate paused for a moment after her entrance, and stood gazing upon the companion of her youth, with a look of such passionate joy, that Flora’s intended coldness was entirely subdued ; and the two sisters rushed into each other’s arms in all the ecstasy of sisterly love.

“ Oh, Flora, Flora ! my dear happy Flora ! ” cried Kate, when she could get words, after the first burst of weeping ; “ have you really come all the way to London to see me ?—poor me ! ” and her tears and sobs were again like to choke her. “ Kate—my dear little Kate ! ” said Flora, “ this is not the way I expected to find you. Do not greet so dreadfully ; surely you are not happy, Kate ? ”

“ But *you* are happy,” said Kate, weeping. “ And how is my good Highland father, and mother, and my brother Daniel ? Ah ! I think, Flora, your clothes have the very smell of the sea-

shore, and of the bark of the nets, and of the heather hills of Argyleshire. Alas the happy days you remind me of, Flora ! ”

“ And so, Kate, you are not so *very* happy, after all,” said Flora, looking incredulously in her face ; “ and you are so thin, and pale, and your eyes are so red ; and yet you have such a grand house, Kate ! Tell me if you are really not happy.”

“ I have no house, Flora,” said Kate, after a little, “ and, I may say, no husband. They are both completely ruled by his two vixen sisters, who kept house for him before he married me, and still have the entire ascendancy over him. My husband, too, is not naturally good tempered ; yet he once loved me, and I might enjoy some little happiness in this new life, if he had the feeling, or the spirit, to treat me as his wife, and free himself and the house from the dominion of his sisters, especially the eldest. But I believe he is rather disappointed in his ambitious career, and in the hopes he entertained of matches for his sisters, and he is somewhat sour and unhappy ; and I have to bear it all, for he is afraid of these women ; and I, the youngest in the family, and the only one who has a chance of being good tempered, am, on account of my low origin, forced to bear the spleen of all in this unhappy house.”

“ But, Kate, surely your husband would not behave so bad as to cast up to you that your father was a fisherman, when he took you from the bonnie seaside himself, and when he thought himself once so happy to get you ? ”

“ Alas ! he does indeed !—too often—too often—when he is crossed abroad, and when his sisters set him on ; and it so humbles me, Flora, when I am sitting at his table, that I cannot lift my head ; and I am so sad, and so heart-broken among them all ! ”

“ Bless me ! and can people be really so miserable,” said Flora, simply, “ who

have plenty of money, and silk dresses to wear every day they rise?"

"It is little you know, my happy Flora, of artificial life here in London," said Kate, mournfully. "As for dress, I cannot even order one but as my sister-in-law chooses; and as for happiness, I have left it behind me on the beautiful banks of the Clyde. O that I were there again!"

"Poor little Kate!" said Flora, wistfully looking again in her sister's face; "and is that the end of all your grand marriage, that has set a' the lasses crazy, from the Fairlie Roads to Gourock Point? I think I'll gang back and marry Bryce Cameron after a'!"

"Is Allan Cameron married yet?" said Kate, sadly. "When did you see blithe and bonnie Allan Cameron?—Alas the day!"

"He gave me this brooch to return to you, Kate," said Flora, taking the brooch out of her bosom. "I wish he had not gien it to me for you, for you're vexed enough already."

"Ah! well you may say I am vexed enough," said she, weeping and contemplating the brooch. "Tell Allan Cameron that I am sensible I did not use him well—that my vain heart was lifted up; but I have suffered for it; many a sad and sleepless night I have lain in my bed, and thought of the delightful days I spent near my father's happy cottage in Scotland, and about you, and about Allan. Alas! just tell him not to think more of me; for I am a sad and sorry married woman, out of my own sphere, and afraid to speak to my own people, panting my heart out and dying by inches, like the pretty silver fish that floundered on the hard stones, after my father had taken them out of their own clear water."

"God help you, Kate!" said Flora, rising; "you will break my heart with grief about you. Let me out of this miserable house! Let me leave you and all your grandeur, since I cannot

help you; and I will pray for you, my poor Kate, every night at my bedside, when I get back to the bonnie shore of Argyleshire."

Sad was the parting of the two weeping sisters, and many a kiss of fraternal affection embittered, yet sweetened, the hour; and anxious was Flora M'Leod to turn her back upon the great city of London, and to journey northwards to her own home in Scotland.

It was a little before sundown, on a Saturday evening, shortly after this, that a buzz of steam let off at the Mid Quay of Greenock, indicated that a steamboat had come in; and it proved to be from the fair seaport of Liverpool, having on board Flora M'Leod, just down from London. The boat as it passed had been watched by the cottagers where she lived up the Firth; and several of them, their day's work being over, set out towards the Clough to see if there was any chance of meeting Flora.

Many were the congratulations, and more the inquiries, when they met Flora, lumbering homewards with her bundle and her umbrella, weary and looking anxiously out for her own sweet cottage by Clyde side. "Ah, Flora! is this you!" cried the whole at once; "and are you really here again! And how is your sister, and all the great people in London? And, indeed, it is very good of you not to look the least proud, after coming from such a grand place!"

With such congratulations was Flora welcomed again among the light-hearted fisher people in the West of Scotland. But it was observed that her tone was now quite altered, and her own humble contentment had completely returned. In short, to bring our story to a close, she was shortly after married to Bryce Cameron, and various other marriages soon followed; for she gave such an account of what she had seen with her eyes, that a com-

plete revolution took place in the sentiments of the whole young people of the neighbourhood.

It was observed in the hamlet that the unhappy Mrs Pounteney was never named after this by any but with a

melancholy shake of the head ; the ambition of the girls to get gentlemen seemed quite extinguished, and Flora in time began to nurse children of her own in humble and pious contentment.

—*The Dominie's Legacy.*

WAT THE PROPHET.

BY JAMES HOGG, "THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD."

ABOUT sixty years ago* there departed this life an old man, who, for sixty years previous to that, was known only by the name of Wat the Prophet. I am even uncertain what his real surname was, though he was familiarly known to the most of my relatives of that day, and I was intimately acquainted with his nephew and heir, whose name was Paterson,—yet I hardly think that was the prophet's surname, but that the man I knew was a maternal nephew. So far, I am shortcoming at the very outset of my tale, for in truth I never heard him distinguished by any other name than Wat the Prophet.†

He must have been a very singular person in every respect. In his youth he was so much more clever and acute than his fellows, that he was viewed as a sort of phenomenon, or rather "a kind of being that had mair airt than his ain." It was no matter what Wat tried, for either at mental or manual exertion he excelled ; and his gifts were so miscellaneous, that it was no wonder his most intimate acquaintances rather stood in awe of him. At the sports of the field, at the exposition of any part of Scripture, at prayer, and at

mathematics, he was altogether unequalled. By this, I mean in the sphere of his acquaintance in the circle in which he moved, for he was the son of a respectable farmer who had a small property. In the last-mentioned art his comprehension is said to have been truly wonderful. He seemed to have an intuitive knowledge of the science of figures from beginning to end, and needed but a glance at the rules to outgo his masters.

But this was not all. In all the labours of the field his progress was equally unaccountable. He could with perfect ease have mown as much hay as two of the best men, sown as much, reaped as much, shorn as many sheep, and smeared as many, and with a little extra exertion could have equalled the efforts of three ordinary men at any time. As for ploughing, or any work with horses, he would never put a hand to it, for he then said he had not the power of the labour himself. However unaccountable all this may be, it is no fabrication ; I have myself heard several men tell, who were wont to shear and smear sheep with him, when he was a much older man than they, that even though he would have been engaged in some fervent demonstration, in spite of all they could do, "he was aye popping off twa sheep, or maybe three, for their ane."

* This interesting account of a very extraordinary character was contributed to the *Edinburgh Literary Journal* in 1829.

† The old prophet's surname was Laidlaw, being of a race that has produced more singular characters than any of our country.

I could multiply anecdotes of this kind without number, but these were mere atoms of the prophet's character—a sort of excrescences, which were nevertheless in keeping with the rest, being matchless of their kind. He was intended by his parents for the Church—that is the Church of the Covenant, to which they belonged. I know not if Wat had consented thereto, but his education tended that way. However, as he said himself, he was born for a higher destiny, which was to reveal the future will of God to mankind for ever and ever. I have been told that he committed many of his prophecies to writing ; and I believe it, for he was a scholar, and a man of rather supernatural abilities ; but I have never been able to find any of them. I have often heard fragments of them, but they were recited by ignorant country people, who, never having understood them themselves, could not make them comprehensible to others. But the history of his call to the prophecy I have so often heard, that I think I can state the particulars, although a little confused in my recollection of them.

This event occurred about this time one hundred years, on an evening in spring, as Wat was going down a wild glen, which I know full well. "I was in a contemplative mood," he said (for he told it to any that asked him), "and was meditating on the mysteries of redemption, and doubting, grievously doubting, the merits of an atonement by blood ; when, to my astonishment in such a place, there was one spoke to me close behind, saying, in the Greek language, 'Is it indeed so ? Is thy faith no better rooted ?'

"I looked behind me, but, perceiving no one, my hair stood all on end, for I thought it was a voice from heaven ; and, after gazing into the firmament, and all around me, I said fearfully, in the same language, 'Who art thou that speakest ?' And the voice

answered me again, 'I am one who laid down my life, witnessing for the glorious salvation which thou art about to deny ; turn, and behold me !'

"And I turned about, for the voice seemed still behind me, turn as I would, and at length I perceived dimly the figure of an old man, of singular aspect and dimensions, close by me. His form was exceedingly large and broad, and his face shone with benignity ; his beard hung down to his girdle, and he had sandals on his feet, which covered his ankles. His right arm and his breast were bare, but he had a crimson mantle over his right shoulder, part of which covered his head, and came round his waist. Having never seen such a figure or dress, or countenance before, I took him for an angel, sent from above to rebuke me ; so I fell at his feet to worship him, or rather to entreat forgiveness for a sin which I had not power to withstand. But he answered me in these words : 'Rise up, and bow not to me, for I am thy fellow-servant, and a messenger from Him whom thou hast in thy heart denied. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. Come, I am commissioned to take thee into the presence of thy Maker and Redeemer.'

"And I said, 'Sir, how speakest thou in this wise ? God is in heaven, and we are upon the earth ; and it is not given to mortal man to scale the heavenly regions, or come into the presence of the Almighty.' And he said, 'Have thy learning and thy knowledge carried thee no higher than this ? Knowest thou not that God is present in this wild glen, the same as in the palaces of light and glory—that His presence surrounds us at this moment—and that He sees all our actions, hears our words, and knows the inmost thoughts of our hearts ?'

"And I said, 'Yes, I know it.'

"Then, are you ready and willing at this moment,' said he, 'to step into His

presence, and avow the sentiments which you have of late been cherishing?"

"And I said, 'I would rather have time to think the matter over again.'

"'Alack! poor man!' said he, 'so you have never been considering that you have all this while been in His immediate presence, and have even been uttering thy blasphemous sentiments aloud to His face, when there was none to hear but He and thyself.'

"And I said, 'Sir, a man cannot force his belief.'

"And he said, 'Thou sayest truly; but I will endeavour to convince thee.'

Here a long colloquy ensued about the external and internal evidences of the Christian religion, which took Wat nearly half a day to relate; but he still maintained his point. He asked his visitant twice who he was, but he declined telling him, saying he wanted his reason convinced, and not to take his word for anything.

Their conversation ended by this mysterious sage leading Wat away by a path which he did not know, which was all covered with a cloud of exceeding brightness. At length they came to a house like a common pavilion, which they entered, but all was solemn silence, and they heard nobody moving in it, and Wat asked his guide where they were now.

"This is the place where heavenly gifts are distributed to humanity," said the reverend apostle; "but they are now no more required, being of no repute. No one asks for them, nor will they accept of them when offered, for worldly wisdom is all in all with the men of this age. Their preaching is a mere farce—an ostentatious parade, to show off great and shining qualifications, one-third of the professors not believing one word of what they assert. The gift of prophecy is denied and laughed at; and all revelation made to man by dreams or visions utterly disclaimed, as if the

Almighty's power of communicating with his creatures were not only shortened, but cut off for ever. This fountain of inspiration, once so crowded, is now, you see, a dreary solitude."

"It was, in truth, a dismal-looking place, for in every chamber, as we passed along, there were benches and seats of judgment, but none to occupy them; the green grass was peeping through the seams of the flooring and chinks of the wall, and never was there a more appalling picture of desolation.

"At length, in the very innermost chamber, we came to three men sitting in a row, the middle one elevated above the others; but they were all sleeping at their posts, and looked as if they had slept there for a thousand years, for their garments were mouldy, and their faces ghastly and withered.

"I did not know what to do or say, for I looked at my guide, and he seemed overcome with sorrow; but thinking it was ill-manners for an intruder not to speak, I said, 'Sirs, I think you are drowsily inclined?' but none of them moved. At length my guide said, in a loud voice, 'Awake, ye servants of the Most High! Or is your sleep to be everlasting?'

"On that they all opened their eyes at once, and stared at me, but their eyes were like the eyes of dead men, and no one of them moyed a muscle, save the middlemost, who pointed with pale haggard hand to three small books, or scrolls, that lay on the bench before them.

"Then my guide said, 'Put forth thine hand and choose one from these. They are all divine gifts, and in these latter days rarely granted to any of the human race.' One was red as blood, the other pale, and the third green; the latter was farthest from me, and my guide said, 'Ponder well before you make your choice. It is a sacred mystery, and from the choice you make, your destiny is fixed through time and

eternity.' I then stretched out my hand, and took the one farthest from me, and he said, 'It is the will of the Lord ; so let it be ! That which you have chosen is the gift of the spirit of prophecy. From henceforth you must live a life of sufferance and tribulation, but your life shall be given you for a proof, in order that you may reveal to mankind all that is to befall them in the latter days. And I opened the book, and it was all written in mystic characters, which I could not decipher nor comprehend ; and he said, 'Put up the book in thy bosom, and preserve it as thou wouldest do the heart within thy breast ; for as long as thou keepest that book, shall thy natural life remain, and the spirit of God remain with thee, and whatsoever thou sayest in the spirit, shall come to pass. But beware that thou deceive not thyself ; for, if thou endeavour to pass off studied speeches, and words of the flesh for those of the spirit, woe be unto thee ! It had been better for thee that thou never hadst been born. Put up the book ; thou canst not understand it now, but it shall be given thee to understand it, for it is an oracle of the most high God, and its words and signs fail not. Go thy ways, and return to the house of thy fathers and thy kinsfolk.'

"And I said, 'Sir, I know not where to go, for I cannot tell by what path you brought me hither.' And he took me by the hand, and led me out by a back-door of the pavilion ; and we entered a great valley, which was all in utter darkness, and I could perceive through the gloom that many people were passing the same way with ourselves ; and I said, 'Sir, this is dreadful ! What place is this ?' And he said, 'This is the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Many of those you see will grope on here for ever, and never get over, for they know not whether they go, or what is before them. But seest thou nothing beside ?'

"And I said, 'I see a bright and shining light beyond, whose rays reach even to this place.'—'That,' said he, 'is the light of the everlasting Gospel ; and to those to whom it is given to perceive that beacon of divine love, the passage over this valley is easy. I have shown it to you ; but if you keep that intrusted to your care, you shall never enter this valley again, but live and reveal the will of God to man till mortality shall no more remain. You shall renew your age like the eagles, and be refreshed with the dews of renovation from the presence of the Lord. Sleep on now, and take your rest, for I must leave you again in this world of sin and sorrow. Be you strong, and overcome it, for men will hold you up to reproach and ridicule, and speak all manner of evil of you ; but see that you join them not in their voluptuousness and iniquity, and the Lord be with you !'"

There is no doubt that this is a confused account of the prophet's sublime vision, it being from second hands that I had it ; and, for one thing, I know that one-half of his relation is not contained in it. For the consequences I can avouch. From that time forth he announced his mission, and began prophesying to such families as he was sent to. But I forgot to mention a very extraordinary fact, that this vision of his actually lasted nine days and nine nights, and at the end of that time he found himself on the very individual spot in the glen where the voice first spoke to him, and so much were his looks changed, that, when he went in, none of the family knew him.

He mixed no more with the men of the world, but wandered about in wilds and solitudes, and when in the spirit, he prophesied with a sublimity and grandeur never equalled. He had plenty of money, and some property to boot, which his father left him ; but these he never regarded, but held on his course of severe abstemiousness,

often subsisting on bread and water, and sometimes for days on water alone, from some motive known only to himself. He had a small black pony on which he rode many years, and which he kept always plump and fat. This little animal waited upon him in all his fastings and prayings with unwearyed patience and affection. There is a well, situated on the south side of a burn, called the Earny Cleuch, on the very boundary between the shires of Dumfries and Selkirk. It is situated in a most sequestered and lonely place, and is called to this day the Prophet's Well, from the many pilgrimages that he made to it ; for it had been revealed to him in one of his visions that this water had some divine virtue, partaking of the nature of the Water of Life. At one time he lay beside this well for nine days and nights, the pony feeding beside him all that time, and though there is little doubt that he had some food with him, no body knew of any that he had ; and it was believed that he fasted all that time, or at least subsisted, on the water of that divine well.

Some men with whom he was familiar—for indeed he was respected and liked by everybody, the whole tenor of his life having been so inoffensive ;—some of his friends, I say, tried to reason him into a belief of his mortality, and that he would taste of death like other men ; but that he treated as altogether chimerical, and not worth answering ; when he did answer, it was by assuring them, that as long as he kept his mystic scroll, and could drink of his well, his body was proof against all the thousand shafts of death. His unearthly monitor appeared to him very frequently, and revealed many secrets to him, and at length disclosed to him that he was STEPHEN, the first martyr for the Gospel of Christ. Our prophet, in the course of time, grew so familiar with him, that he called him by the friendly name of Auld Steenie, and

told his friends *when* he had seen him, and *part* of what he had told him, but never the whole.

When not in his visionary and prophetic moods, he sometimes indulged in a little relaxation, such as draught-playing and fishing ; but in these, like other things, he quite excelled all compeers. He was particularly noted for killing salmon, by throwing the spear at a great distance. He gave all his fish away to poor people, or such as he favoured that were nearest to him at the time ; so that, either for his prophetic gifts, or natural bounty, the prophet was always a welcome guest, whether to poor or rich.

He prophesied for the space of forty years, foretelling many things that came to pass in his lifetime, and many which have come to pass since his death. I have heard of a parable of his, to which I can do no justice, of a certain woman who had four sons, three of whom were legitimate, and the other not. The latter being rather uncultivated in his manners, and not so well educated as his brethren, his mother took for him ample possessions at a great distance from the rest of the family. The young blade succeeded in his farming speculations amazingly, and was grateful to his parent, and friendly with his brethren in all their interchanges of visits. But when the mother perceived his success, she sent and demanded a tenth from him of all he possessed. This rather astounded the young man, and he hesitated about compliance in parting with so much, at any rate. But the parent insisted on her right to demand that or any sum which she chose, and the teind she would have. The lad, not wishing to break with his parent and benefactor, bade her say no more about it, and he would give her the full value of that she demanded as of his own accord ; but she would have it in no other way than as her own proper right. On this the headstrong and

powerful knave took the law on his mother ; won, and ruined her ; so that she and her three remaining sons were reduced to beggary. Wat then continued—“ And now it is to yourselves I speak this, ye children of my people, for this evil is nigh you, even at your doors. There are some here who will not see it, but there are seven here who will see the end of it, and then they shall know that there has been a prophet among them.”

It having been in a private family where this prophecy was delivered, they looked always forward with fear for some contention breaking out among them. But after the American war and its consequences, the whole of Wat’s parable was attributed thereto, and the good people relieved from the horrors of their impending and ruinous lawsuit.

One day he was prophesying about the judgment, when a young gentleman said to him, “ O, sir, I wish you could tell us when the judgment will be.” “ Alas ! my man,” returned he, “ that is what I cannot do ; for of that day and of that hour knoweth no man ; no, not the angels which are in heaven, but the Almighty Father alone. But there will be many judgments before the great and general one. In seven years there will be a judgment on Scotland. In seven times seven there will be a great and heavy judgment on all the nations of Europe ; and in other seven times seven there will be a greater one on all the nations of the world ; but whether or not that is to be the last judgment, God only knoweth.”

These are dangerous and difficult sayings of our prophet. I wonder what the Rev. Edward Irving would say about them, or if they approach in any degree to his calculations. Not knowing the year when this prophecy was delivered, it is impossible to reason on its fulfilment, but it is evident that both the first eras must be overpast. He

always predicted ruin on the cause of Prince Charles Stuart, even when the whole country was ringing with applause of his bravery and conquests. Our prophet detested the politics of that house, and announced ruin and desolation not only on the whole house, but on all who supported it. The only prophecy which I have yet seen in writing relates to that brave but unfortunate adventurer, and is contained in a letter to a Mrs Johnston, Moffat, dated October 1st, 1745, which must have been very shortly after the battle of Prestonpans. After some religious consolation, he says, “ As for that man, Charles Stuart, let no spirit be cast down because of him, for he is only a meteor predicting a sudden storm, which is destined to quench his baleful light for ever. He is a broken pot ; a vessel wherein God hath no pleasure. His boasting shall be turned into dread, and his pride of heart into astonishment. Terror shall make him afraid on every side ; he shall look on his right hand, and there shall be none to know him ; and on his left hand, and lo ! destruction shall be ready at his side—even the first-born of death shall open his jaws to devour him. His confidence shall pass away for ever, even until the king of terrors arrive and scatter brimstone upon his habitation. His roots shall be dried up beneath, and the foliage of his boughs stripped off above, until his remembrance shall perish from the face of the earth. He shall be thrown into the deep waters, and the billows of God’s wrath shall pass over him. He shall fly to the mountains, but they shall not hide him ; and to the islands, but they shall cast him out. Then shall he be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the land.

“ Knowest thou not this of old time, that the triumph of the wicked is of short duration, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment ? Though his excellency mount up into the heavens,

and his pride reach the stars, yet shall he perish for ever, like a shadow that passeth away and is no more. They who have seen him in the pride of his might shall say, Where is he? Where now is the man that made the nations to tremble? Is he indeed passed away as a dream, and chased away as a vision of the night? Yea, the Lord, who sent him as a scourge on the wicked of the land, shall ordain the hand of the wicked to scourge him till his flesh and his soul shall depart, and his name be blotted out of the world. Therefore, my friend in the Lord, let none despise because of this man, but lay these things up in thy heart, and ponder on them, and when they are fulfilled, then shalt thou believe that the Lord sent me."

From the tenor of this prophecy, it would appear that he has borrowed largely from some of the most sublime passages of Scripture, which could not fail of giving a tincture of sublimity to many of his sayings, so much admired by the country people. It strikes me there are some of these expressions literally from the Book of Job; but, notwithstanding, it must be acknowledged that some parts of it are pecu-

liarly applicable to the after-fate of Charles Edward.

When old age began to steal on him, and his beloved friends to drop out of the world, one after another, he became extremely heavy-hearted at being obliged to continue for ever in the flesh. He never had any trouble; but he felt a great change take place in his constitution, which he did not expect, and it was then he became greatly concerned at being obliged to bear a body of fading flesh about until the end of time, often saying, that the flesh of man was never made to be immortal. In this dejected state he continued about two years, often entreating the Lord to resume that which He had given him, and leave him to the mercy of his Redeemer, like other men. Accordingly, his heavenly monitor appeared to him once more, and demanded the scroll of the spirit of prophecy, which was delivered up to him at the well in the wilderness; and then, with a holy admonition, he left him for ever on earth. Wat lived three years after this, cheerful and happy, and died in peace, old, and full of days, leaving a good worldly substance behind him.

THE SNOW-STORM.

BY PROFESSOR WILSON.

IN summer there is beauty in the wildest moors of Scotland, and the wayfaring man who sits down for an hour's rest beside some little spring that flows unheard through the brightened moss and water-cresses, feels his weary heart revived by the silent, serene, and solitary prospect. On every side sweet sunny spots of verdure smile towards him from among the melancholy heather; unexpectedly in the soli-

tude a stray sheep, it may be with its lambs, starts half-alarmed at his motionless figure; insects, large, bright, and beautiful, come careering by him through the desert air; nor does the wild want its own songsters,—the gray linnet, fond of the blooming furze, and now and then the lark mounting up to heaven above the summits of the green pastoral hills. During such a sunshiny hour, the lonely cottage on the waste seems

to stand in a paradise ; and as he rises to pursue his journey, the traveller looks back and blesses it with a mingled emotion of delight and envy. There, thinks he, abide the children of Innocence and Contentment, the two most benign spirits that watch over human life.

But other thoughts arise in the mind of him who may chance to journey through the same scene in the desolation of winter. The cold bleak sky girdles the moor as with a belt of ice—life is frozen in air and on earth. The silence is not of repose but extinction ; and should a solitary human dwelling catch his eye, half buried in the snow, he is sad for the sake of them whose destiny it is to abide far from the cheerful haunts of men, shrouded up in melancholy, by poverty held in thrall, or pining away in unvisited and unintended disease.

But, in good truth, the heart of human life is but imperfectly discovered from its countenance ; and before we can know what the summer or what the winter yields for enjoyment or trial to our country's peasantry, we must have conversed with them in their fields and by their firesides, and made ourselves acquainted with the powerful ministry of the seasons, not over those objects alone that feed the eye and the imagination, but over all the incidents, occupations, and events, that modify or constitute the existence of the poor.

I have a short and simple story to tell of the winter life of the moorland cottager—a story but of one evening—with few events and no single catastrophe—which may haply please those hearts whose delight it is to think on the humble underplots that are carrying on in the great drama of life.

Two cottagers, husband and wife, were sitting by their cheerful peat-fire one winter evening, in a small lonely hut on the edge of a wide moor, at some miles' distance from any other habitation. There had been, at one time, several

huts of the same kind erected close together, and inhabited by families of the poorest class of day-labourers, who found work among the distant farms, and at night returned to dwellings which were rent-free, with their little gardens won from the waste. But one family after another had dwindled away, and the turf-built huts had all fallen into ruins, except one that had always stood in the centre of this little solitary village, with its summer-walls covered with the richest honeysuckles, and in the midst of the brightest of all the gardens. It alone now sent up its smoke into the clear winter sky—and its little end window, now lighted up, was the only ground-star that shone towards the belated traveller, if any such ventured to cross, on a winter night, a scene so dreary and desolate. The affairs of the small household were all arranged for the night. The little rough pony, that had drawn in a sledge, from the heart of the Black-moss, the fuel by whose blaze the cottars were now sitting cheerily, and the little Highland cow, whose milk enabled them to live, were standing amicably together, under cover of a rude shed, of which one side was formed by the peat-stack, and which was at once byre, and stable, and hen-roost. Within, the clock ticked cheerfully as the fire-light reached its old oak-wood case, across the yellow-sanded floor ; and a small round table stood between, covered with a snow-white cloth, on which were milk and oat-cakes, the morning, mid-day, and evening meal of these frugal and contented cottars. The spades and the mattocks of the labourer were collected into one corner, and showed that the succeeding day was the blessed Sabbath ; while on the wooden chimney-piece was seen lying an open Bible ready for family worship.

The father and the mother were sitting together without opening their lips, but with their hearts overflowing with happiness, for on this Saturday night

they were, every minute, expecting to hear at the latch the hand of their only daughter, a maiden of about fifteen years, who was at service with a farmer over the hills. This dutiful child was, as they knew, to bring home to them "her sair-won penny fee," a pittance which, in the beauty of her girlhood, she earned singing at her work, and which, in the benignity of that sinless time, she would pour with tears into the bosoms she so dearly loved. Forty shillings a-year were all the wages of sweet Hannah Lee; but though she wore at her labour a tortoise-shell comb in her auburn hair, and though in the kirk none were more becomingly arrayed than she, one half at least of her earnings were to be reserved for the holiest of all purposes; and her kind, innocent heart was gladdened when she looked on the little purse that was, on the long-expected Saturday night, to be taken from her bosom, and put, with a blessing, into the hand of her father, now growing old at his daily toils.

Of such a child the happy cottars were thinking in their silence. And well, indeed, might they be called happy. It is at that sweet season that filial piety is most beautiful. Their own Hannah had just outgrown the mere unthinking gladness of childhood, but had not yet reached that time when inevitable selfishness mixes with the pure current of love. She had begun to think on what her affectionate heart had felt so long; and when she looked on the pale face and bending frame of her mother, on the deepening wrinkles and whitening hairs of her father, often would she lie weeping for their sakes on her midnight bed, and wish that she were beside them as they slept, that she might kneel down and kiss them, and mention their names over and over again in her prayer. The parents whom before she had only loved, her expanding heart now also venerated. With gushing tenderness was now mingled a

holy fear and an awful reverence. She had discerned the relation in which she, an only child, stood to her poor parents, now that they were getting old, and there was not a passage in Scripture that spake of parents or of children, from Joseph sold into slavery to Mary weeping below the Cross, that was not written, never to be obliterated, on her uncorrupted heart.

The father rose from his seat, and went to the door to look out into the night. The stars were in thousands, and the full moon was risen. It was almost light as day, and the snow, that seemed encrusted with diamonds, was so hardened by the frost, that his daughter's homeward feet would leave no mark on its surface. He had been toiling all day among the distant Castlewoods, and, stiff and wearied as he now was, he was almost tempted to go to meet his child; but his wife's kind voice dissuaded him, and, returning to the fireside, they began to talk of her whose image had been so long passing before them in their silence.

"She is growing up to be a bonny lassie," said the mother; "her long and weary attendance on me during my fever last spring kept her down a while—but now she is sprouting fast and fair as a lily, and may the blessing of God be as dew and as sunshine to our sweet flower all the days she bloometh upon this earth."

"Ay, Agnes," replied the father, "we are not very old yet—though we are getting older—and a few years will bring her to woman's estate; and what thing on this earth, think ye, human or brute, would ever think of injuring her? Why, I was speaking about her yesterday to the minister, as he was riding by, and he told me that none answered at the examination in the kirk so well as Hannah. Poor thing—I well think she has all the Bible by heart—indeed, she has read but little else—only some stories, too true ones, of the blessed

martyrs, and some o' the auld sangs o' Scotland, in which there is nothing but what is good, and which, to be sure, she sings, God bless her, sweeter than any laverock."

"Ay,—were we both to die this very night, she would be happy. Not that she would forget us all the days of her life. But have you not seen, husband, that God always makes the orphan happy? None so little lonesome as they! They come to make friends o' all the bonny and sweet things in the world around them, and all the kind hearts in the world make friends o' them. They come to know that God is more especially the Father o' them on earth whose parents he has taken up to heaven; and therefore it is that they, for whom so many have fears, fear not at all for themselves, but go dancing and singing along like children whose parents are both alive. Would it not be so with our dear Hannah? So douce and thoughtful a child—but never sad or miserable—ready, it is true, to shed tears for little, but as ready to dry them up and break out into smiles! I know not why it is, husband, but this night my heart warms towards her beyond usual. The moon and stars are at this moment looking down upon her, and she looking up to them, as she is glinting homewards over the snow. I wish she were but here, and taking the comb out o' her bonny hair, and letting it all fall down in clusters before the fire, to melt away the cranreuch!"

While the parents were thus speaking of their daughter, a loud sough of wind came suddenly over the cottage, and the leafless ash-tree under whose shelter it stood, creaked and groaned dismally as it passed by. The father started up, and, going again to the door, saw that a sudden change had come over the face of the night. The moon had nearly disappeared, and was just visible in a dim, yellow, glimmering den in the sky. All the remote

stars were obscured, and only one or two were faintly seen in a sky that half an hour before was perfectly cloudless, but that was now driving with rack, and mist, and sleet, the whole atmosphere being in commotion. He stood for a single moment to observe the direction of this unforeseen storm, and then hastily asked for his staff. "I thought I had been more weather-wise—a storm is coming down from the Cairnbrae-hawse, and we shall have nothing but a wild night." He then whistled on his dog—an old sheep-dog, too old for its former labours—and set off to meet his daughter, who might then, for aught he knew, be crossing the Black-moss. The mother accompanied her husband to the door, and took a long frightened look at the angry sky. As she kept gazing, it became still more terrible. The last shred of blue was extinguished, the wind went whirling in roaring eddies, and great flakes of snow circled about in the middle air, whether drifted up from the ground, or driven down from the clouds, the fear-stricken mother knew not, but she at least knew that it seemed a night of danger, despair, and death. "Lord have mercy on us, James, what will become of our poor bairn!" But her husband heard not her words, for he was already out of sight in the snow-storm, and she was left to the terror of her own soul in that lonesome cottage.

Little Hannah Lee had left her master's house, soon as the rim of the great moon was seen by her eyes, that had been long anxiously watching it from the window, rising, like a joyful dream, over the gloomy mountain-tops; and all by herself she tripped along beneath the beauty of the silent heaven. Still as she kept ascending and descending the knolls that lay in the bosom of the glen, she sang to herself a song, a hymn, or a psalm, without the accompaniment of the streams, now all silent

in the frost ; and ever and anon she stopped to try to count the stars that lay in some more beautiful part of the sky, or gazed on the constellations that she knew, and called them, in her joy, by the names they bore among the shepherds. There were none to hear her voice, or see her smiles, but the ear and eye of Providence. As on she glided, and took her looks from heaven, she saw her own little fireside—her parents waiting for her arrival—the Bible opened for worship—her own little room kept so neatly for her, with its mirror hanging by the window, in which to braid her hair by the morning light—her bed prepared for her by her mother's hand—the primroses in her garden peeping through the snow—old Tray, who ever welcomed her home with his dim white eyes—the pony and the cow ;—friends all, and inmates of that happy household. So stepped she along, while the snow diamonds glittered around her feet, and the frost wove a wreath of lucid pearls round her forehead.

She had now reached the edge of the Black-moss, which lay half-way between her master's and her father's dwelling, when she heard a loud noise coming down Glen-Scrae, and in a few seconds she felt on her face some flakes of snow. She looked up the glen, and saw the snow-storm coming down fast as a flood. She felt no fears ; but she ceased her song ; and had there been a human eye to look upon her there, it might have seen a shadow on her face. She continued her course, and felt bolder and bolder every step that brought her nearer to her parents' house. But the snow-storm had now reached the Black-moss, and the broad line of light that had lain in the direction of her home was soon swallowed up, and the child was in utter darkness. She saw nothing but the flakes of snow, interminably intermingled, and furiously wafted in the air, close to her head ;

she heard nothing but one wild, fierce, fitful howl. The cold became intense, and her little feet and hands were fast being benumbed into insensibility.

"It is a fearful change," muttered the child to herself ; but still she did not fear, for she had been born in a moorland cottage, and lived all her days among the hardships of the hills. "What will become of the poor sheep !" thought she,—but still she scarcely thought of her own danger, for innocence, and youth, and joy, are slow to think of aught evil befalling themselves, and, thinking benignly of all living things, forget their own fear in their pity for others' sorrow. At last, she could no longer discern a single mark on the snow, either of human steps, or of sheep-track, or the footprint of a wild-fowl. Suddenly, too, she felt out of breath and exhausted, and, shedding tears for herself at last, sank down in the snow.

It was now that her heart began to quake with fear. She remembered stories of shepherds lost in the snow, of a mother and a child frozen to death on that very moor—and in a moment she knew that she was to die. Bitterly did the poor child weep, for death was terrible to her, who, though poor, enjoyed the bright little world of youth and innocence. The skies of heaven were dearer than she knew to her—so were the flowers of earth. She had been happy at her work, happy in her sleep,—happy in the kirk on Sabbath. A thousand thoughts had the solitary child,—and in her own heart was a spring of happiness, pure and undisturbed as any fount that sparkles unseen all the year through, in some quiet nook among the pastoral hills. But now there was to be an end of all this—she was to be frozen to death—and lie there till the thaw might come ; and then her father would find her body, and carry it away to be buried in the kirk-yard.

The tears were frozen on her cheeks

as soon as shed ; and scarcely had her little hands strength to clasp themselves together, as the thought of an overruling and merciful Lord came across her heart. Then, indeed, the fears of this religious child were calmed, and she heard without terror the plover's wailing cry, and the deep boom of the bittern sounding in the moss. "I will repeat the Lord's Prayer ;" and, drawing her plaid more closely around her, she whispered, beneath its ineffectual cover,— "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name ; thy kingdom come ; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Had human aid been within fifty yards, it could have been of no avail—eye could not see her, ear could not hear her in that howling darkness. But that low prayer was heard in the centre of eternity—and that little sinless child was lying in the snow, beneath the all-seeing eye of God.

The maiden, having prayed to her Father in heaven, then thought of her father on earth. Alas ! they were not far separated ! The father was lying but a short distance from his child ; he too had sunk down in the drifting snow, after having, in less than an hour, exhausted all the strength of fear, pity, hope, despair, and resignation, that could rise in a father's heart, blindly seeking to rescue his only child from death, thinking that one desperate exertion might enable them to perish in each other's arms. There they lay, within a stone's-throw of each other, while a huge snow-drift was every moment piling itself up into a more insurmountable barrier between the dying parent and his dying child.

There was all this while a blazing fire in the cottage, a white-spread table, and beds prepared for the family to lie down in peace. Yet was she who sat therein more to be pitied than the old man and the child stretched upon the snow. "I will not go to

seek them—that would be tempting Providence, and wilfully putting out the lamp of life. No ; I will abide here, and pray for their souls !" Then as she knelt down, looked she at the useless fire burning away so cheerfully, when all she loved might be dying of cold ; and unable to bear the thought, she shrieked out a prayer, as if she might pierce the sky up to the very throne of God, and send with it her own miserable soul to plead before Him for the deliverance of her child and husband. She then fell down in blessed forgetfulness of all trouble, in the midst of the solitary cheerfulness of that bright-burning hearth, and the Bible, which she had been trying to read in the pauses of her agony, remained clasped in her hands.

Hannah Lee had been a servant for more than six months, and it was not to be thought that she was not beloved in her master's family. Soon after she had left the house, her master's son, a youth of about eighteen years, who had been among the hills looking after the sheep, came home, and was disappointed to find that he had lost an opportunity of accompanying Hannah part of the way to her father's cottage. But the hour of eight had gone by, and not even the company of young William Grieve could induce the kind-hearted daughter to delay setting out on her journey a few minutes beyond the time promised to her parents. "I do not like the night," said William ; "there will be a fresh fall of snow soon, or the witch of Glen-Screa is a liar, for a snow-cloud is hanging o'er the Birch-tree-linn, and it may be down to the Black-moss as soon as Hannah Lee. So he called his two sheep-dogs that had taken their place under the long table before the window, and set out, half in joy, half in fear, to overtake Hannah, and see her safely across the Black-moss.

The snow began to drift so fast, that before he had reached the head of the

glen, there was nothing to be seen but a little bit of the wooden rail of the bridge across the Sauch-burn. William Grieve was the most active shepherd in a large pastoral parish ; he had often passed the night among the wintry hills for the sake of a few sheep, and all the snow that ever fell from heaven would not have made him turn back when Hannah Lee was before him, and, as his terrified heart told him, in imminent danger of being lost. As he advanced, he felt that it was no longer a walk of love or friendship, for which he had been glad of an excuse. Death stared him in the face, and his young soul, now beginning to feel all the passions of youth, was filled with frenzy. He had seen Hannah every day—at the fireside—at work—in the kirk—on holidays—at prayers—bringing supper to his aged parents—smiling and singing about the house from morning till night. She had often brought his own meal to him among the hills ; and he now found that, though he had never talked to her about love, except smilingly and playfully, he loved her beyond father or mother, or his own soul. “I will save thee, Hannah,” he cried, with a loud sob, “or lie down beside thee in the snow—and we will die together in our youth.” A wild whistling wind went by him, and the snow-flakes whirled so fiercely round his head, that he staggered on for a while in utter blindness. He knew the path that Hannah must have taken, and went forwards shouting aloud, and stopping every twenty yards to listen for a voice. He sent his well-trained dogs over the snow in all directions—repeating to them her name, “Hannah Lee,” that the dumb animals might, in their sagacity, know for whom they were searching ; and, as they looked up in his face, and set off to scour the moor, he almost believed that they knew his meaning (and it is probable they did), and were eager to find in her bewilder-

ment the kind maiden by whose hand they had so often been fed. Often went they off into the darkness, and as often returned, but their looks showed that every quest had been in vain. Meanwhile the snow was of a fearful depth, and falling without intermission or diminution. Had the young shepherd been thus alone, walking across the moor on his ordinary business, it is probable that he might have been alarmed for his own safety ; nay, that, in spite of all his strength and agility, he might have sunk down beneath the inclemency of the night, and perished. But now the passion of his soul carried him with supernatural strength along, and extricated him from wreath and pitfall. Still there was no trace of poor Hannah Lee ; and one of his dogs at last came close to his feet, worn out entirely, and afraid to leave its master, while the other was mute, and, as the shepherd thought, probably unable to force its way out of some hollow, or through some floundering drift.

Then he all at once knew that Hannah Lee was dead, and dashed himself down in the snow in a fit of passion. It was the first time that the youth had ever been sorely tried ; all his hidden and unconscious love for the fair lost girl had flowed up from the bottom of his heart, and at once the sole object which had blessed his life and made him the happiest of the happy, was taken away and cruelly destroyed ; so that, sullen, wrathful, baffled, and despairing, there he lay cursing his existence, and in too great agony to think of prayer. “God,” he then thought, “has forsaken me, and why should He think on me, when He suffers one so good and beautiful as Hannah to be frozen to death ?” God thought both of him and Hannah ; and through His infinite mercy forgave the sinner in his wild turbulence of passion. William Grieve had never gone to bed without joining in prayer, and he revered the Sabbath-day and

kept it holy. Much is forgiven to the human heart by Him who so fearfully framed it ; and God is not slow to pardon the love which one human being bears to another, in his frailty—even though that love forget or arraign His own unsleeping providence. His voice has told us to love one another—and William loved Hannah in simplicity, innocence, and truth. That she should perish was a thought so dreadful, that, in its agony, God seemed a ruthless being. “Blow—blow—blow—and drift us up for ever—we cannot be far asunder—Oh, Hannah—Hannah, think ye not that the fearful God has forsaken us?”

As the boy groaned these words passionately through his quivering lips, there was a sudden lowness in the air, and he heard the barking of his absent dog, while the one at his feet hurried off in the direction of the sound, and soon loudly joined the cry. It was not a bark of surprise, or anger, or fear—but of recognition and love. William sprang up from his bed in the snow, and, with his heart knocking at his bosom even to sickness, he rushed headlong through the drifts with a giant’s strength, and fell down, half dead with joy and terror, beside the body of Hannah Lee.

But he soon recovered from that fit, and, lifting the cold corpse in his arms, he kissed her lips, and her cheeks, and her forehead, and her closed eyes, till, as he kept gazing on her face in utter despair, her head fell back on his shoulder, and a long deep sigh came from her inmost bosom. “She is yet alive, thank God!”—and, as that expression left his lips for the first time that night, he felt a pang of remorse : “I said, O God, that Thou hadst forsaken us—I am not worthy to be saved; but let not this maiden perish, for the sake of her parents, who have no other child.” The distracted youth prayed to God with the same earnestness as if he had been beseeching a fellow-crea-

ture, in whose hand was the power of life and of death. The presence of the Great Being was felt by him in the dark and howling wild, and strength was imparted to him as to a deliverer. He bore along the fair child in his arms, even as if she had been a lamb. The snow-drift blew not ; the wind fell dead ; a sort of glimmer, like that of an upbreaking and disparting storm, gathered about him ; his dogs barked, and jumped, and burrowed joyfully in the snow ; and the youth, strong in sudden hope, exclaimed, “With the blessing of God, who has not deserted us in our sore distress, will I carry thee, Hannah, in my arms, and lay thee down alive in the house of thy father.” At this moment there were no stars in heaven, but she opened her dim blue eyes upon him in whose bosom she was unconsciously lying, and said, as in a dream, “Send the ribbon that ties up my hair as a keepsake to William Grieve.” “She thinks that she is on her deathbed, and forgets not the son of her master. It is the voice of God that tells me she will not now die, and that, under His grace, I shall be her deliverer.”

The short-lived rage of the storm was soon over, and William could attend to the beloved being on his bosom. The warmth of his heart seemed to infuse life into hers ; and, as he gently placed her feet on the snow, till he muffled her up in his plaid, as well as in her own, she made an effort to stand, and, with extreme perplexity and bewilderment, faintly inquired where she was, and what fearful misfortune had befallen them ? She was, however, too weak to walk ; and, as her young master carried her along, she murmured, “O William ! what if my father be in the moor ?—For if you, who need care so little about me, have come hither, as I suppose, to save my life, you may be sure that my father sat not within doors during the storm.”

As she spoke, it was calm below, but the wind was still alive in the upper air, and cloud, rack, mist, and sleet were all driving about in the sky. Out shone for a moment the pallid and ghostly moon, through a rent in the gloom, and by that uncertain light came staggering forward the figure of a man. "Father—father!" cried Hannah—and his gray hairs were already on her cheek. The barking of the dogs, and the shouting of the young shepherd, had struck his ear, as the sleep of death was stealing over him, and, with the last effort of benumbed nature, he had roused himself from that fatal torpor, and pressed through the snow-wreath that had separated him from his child. As yet they knew not of the danger each had endured, but each judged of the other's sufferings from their own; and father and daughter regarded one another as creatures rescued, and hardly yet rescued, from death.

But a few minutes ago, and the three human beings who loved each other so well, and now feared not to cross the moor in safety, were, as they thought, on their deathbeds. Deliverance now shone upon them all like a gentle fire, dispelling that pleasant but deadly drowsiness; and the old man was soon able to assist William Grieve in leading Hannah along through the snow. Her colour and her warmth returned, and her lover—for so might he well now be called—felt her heart gently beating against his side. Filled as that heart was with gratitude to God, joy in her deliverance, love to her father, and purest affection for her master's son, never before had the innocent maiden known what was happiness, and never more was she to forget it. The night was now almost calm, and fast returning to its former beauty, when the party saw the first twinkle of the fire through the low window of the Cottage of the Moor. They soon were at the garden gate,

and, to relieve the heart of the wife and mother within, they talked loudly and cheerfully—naming each other familiarly, and laughing between, like persons who had known neither danger nor distress.

No voice answered from within—no footstep came to the door, which stood open as when the father had left it in his fear, and now he thought with affright that his wife, feeble as she was, had been unable to support the loneliness, and had followed him out into the night, never to be brought home alive. As they bore Hannah into the house, this fear gave way to worse, for there upon the hard clay floor lay the mother upon her face, as if murdered by some savage blow. She was in the same deadly swoon into which she had fallen on her husband's departure three hours before. The old man raised her up, and her pulse was still—so was her heart—her face pale and sunken—and her body cold as ice. "I have recovered a daughter," said the old man, "but I have lost a wife;" and he carried her with a groan to the bed, on which he laid her lifeless body. The sight was too much for Hannah, worn out as she was, and who had hitherto been able to support herself in the delightful expectation of gladdening her mother's heart by her safe arrival. She, too, now swooned away, and, as she was placed on the bed beside her mother, it seemed, indeed, that Death, disappointed of his prey on the wild moor, had seized it in the cottage and by the fireside. The husband knelt down by the bedside, and held his wife's icy hand in his, while William Grieve, appalled and awe-stricken, hung over his Hannah, and inwardly implored God that the night's wild adventure might not have so ghastly an end. But Hannah's young heart soon began once more to beat—and, soon as she came to her recollection, she rose up with a face whiter than ashes and

free from all smiles, as if none had ever played there, and joined her father and young master in their efforts to restore her mother to life.

It was the mercy of God that had struck her down to the earth, insensible to the shrieking winds, and the fears that would otherwise have killed her. Three hours of that wild storm had passed over her head, and she heard nothing more than if she had been asleep in a breathless night of the summer dew. Not even a dream had touched her brain, and when she opened her eyes, which, as she thought, had been but a moment shut, she had scarcely time to recall to her recollection the image of her husband rushing out into the storm, and of a daughter therein lost, till she beheld that very husband kneeling tenderly by her bedside, and that very daughter smoothing the pillow on which her aching temples reclined. But she knew from the white steadfast countenances before her that there had been tribulation and deliverance, and she looked on the beloved beings ministering by her bed, as more fearfully dear to her from the unimagined danger from which she felt assured they had been rescued by the arm of the Almighty.

There is little need to speak of returning recollection, and returning strength. They had all now power to weep, and power to pray. The Bible had been lying in its place ready for worship, and the father read aloud that chapter in which is narrated our Saviour's act of miraculous power by which He saved Peter from the sea. Soon as the solemn thoughts awakened by that act of mercy, so similar to that which had rescued themselves from death, had subsided, and they had all risen up from prayer, they gathered themselves in gratitude round the little table which had stood so many hours spread; and exhausted nature was strengthened and restored by a frugal and simple meal,

partaken of in silent thankfulness. The whole story of the night was then calmly recited; and when the mother heard how the stripling had followed her sweet Hannah into the storm, and borne her in his arms through a hundred drifted heaps—and then looked upon her in her pride, so young, so innocent, and so beautiful, she knew, that were the child indeed to become an orphan, there was one who, if there was either trust in nature or truth in religion, would guard and cherish her all the days of her life.

It was not nine o'clock when the storm came down from Glen-Screa upon the Black-moss, and now in a pause of silence the clock struck twelve. Within these three hours William and Hannah had led a life of trouble and of joy, that had enlarged and kindled their hearts within them; and they felt that henceforth they were to live wholly for each other's sakes. His love was the proud and exulting love of a deliverer, who, under Providence, had saved from the frost and the snow, the innocence and the beauty of which his young passionate heart had been so desperately enamoured; and he now thought of his own Hannah Lee ever more moving about in his father's house, not as a servant, but as a daughter—and, when some few happy years had gone by, his own most beautiful and loving wife. The innocent maiden still called him her young master, but was not ashamed of the holy affection which she now knew that she had long felt for the fearless youth on whose bosom she had thought herself dying in that cold and miserable moor. Her heart leapt within her when she heard her parents bless him by his name; and when he took her hand into his before them, and vowed before that Power who had that night saved them from the snow, that Hannah Lee should ere long be his wedded wife, she wept and sobbed as if her heart would break in a fit of strange and insupportable happiness.

The young shepherd rose to bid them farewell—"My father will think I am lost," said he, with a grave smile, "and my Hannah's mother knows what it is to fear for a child." So nothing was said to detain him, and the family went with him to the door. The skies smiled as serenely as if a storm had never swept before the stars; the moon was sinking from her meridian, but in cloudless splendour; and the hollow of

the hills was hushed as that of heaven. Danger there was none over the placid night-scene; the happy youth soon crossed the Black-moss, now perfectly still; and, perhaps, just as he was passing, with a shudder of gratitude, the very spot where his sweet Hannah Lee had so nearly perished, she was lying down to sleep in her innocence, or dreaming of one now dearer to her than all on earth but her parents.

LOVE AT ONE GLIMPSE;

OR, THE GLASGOW GENTLEMAN AND THE LADY.

SOME years ago, there used to be pointed out, upon the streets of Glasgow, a man whose intellect had been unsettled upon a very strange account. When a youth, he had happened to pass a lady on a crowded throughfare—a lady whose extreme beauty, though dimmed by the intervention of a veil, and seen but for a moment, made an indelible impression upon his mind. This lovely vision shot rapidly past him, and was in an instant lost amidst the commonplace crowd through which it moved. He was so confounded by the tumult of his feelings, that he could not pursue, or even attempt to see it again. Yet he never afterwards forgot it.

With a mind full of distracting thoughts, and a heart filled alternately with gushes of pleasure and of pain, the man slowly left the spot where he had remained for some minutes as it were thunderstruck. He soon after, without being aware of what he wished, or what he was doing, found himself again at the place. He came to the very spot where he had stood when the lady passed, mused for some time about it, went to a little distance, and then came up

as he had come when he met the exquisite subject of his reverie—unconsciously deluding himself with the idea that this might recall her to the spot. She came not; he felt disappointed. He tried again; still she abstained from passing. He continued to traverse the place till the evening, when the street became deserted. By-and-by, he was left altogether alone. He then saw that all his fond efforts were vain, and he left the silent, lonely street at midnight, with a soul as desolate as that gloomy terrace.

For weeks afterwards he was never off the streets. He wandered hither and thither throughout the town, like a forlorn ghost. In particular, he often visited the place where he had first seen the object of his abstracted thoughts, as if he considered that he had a better chance of seeing her there than anywhere else. He frequented every place of public amusement to which he could purchase admission; and he made the tour of all the churches in the town. All was in vain. He never again placed his eyes upon that angelic countenance. She was ever present to his mental optics, but she never appeared in a

tangible form. Without her essential presence, all the world beside was to him as a blank—a wilderness.

Madness invariably takes possession of the mind which broods over much or over long upon some engrossing idea. So did it prove with this singular lover. He grew “innocent,” as the people of this country tenderly phrase it. His insanity, however, was little more than mere abstraction. The course of his mind was stopped at a particular point. After this he made no further progress in any intellectual attainment. He acquired no new ideas. His whole soul stood still. He was like a clock stopped at a particular hour, with some things, too, about him, which, like the motionless indices of that machine, pointed out the date of the interruption. As, for instance, he ever after wore a peculiarly long-backed and high-necked coat, as well as a neck-cloth of a particular spot—being the fashion of the year when he saw the lady. Indeed, he was a sort of living memorial of the dress, gait, and manners of a former day. It was evident that he clung with a degree of fondness to every thing which bore relation to the great incident of his life. Nor could he endure any thing that tended

to cover up or screen from his recollection that glorious yet melancholy circumstance. He had the same feeling of veneration for that day, that circumstance, and for himself, as he then existed, which caused the chivalrous lover of former times to preserve upon his lips, as long as he could, the imaginary delight which they had drawn from the touch of his mistress’s hand.

When I last saw this unfortunate person, he was getting old, and seemed still more deranged than formerly. Every female whom he met on the street, especially if at all good looking, he gazed at with an enquiring, anxious expression; and when she had passed, he usually stood still a few moments and mused, with his eyes cast upon the ground. It was remarkable, that he gazed most anxiously upon women whose age and figures most nearly resembled that of his unknown mistress at the time he had seen her, and that he did not appear to make allowance for the years which had passed since his eyes met that vision. This was part of his madness. Strange power of love! Incomprehensible mechanism of the human heart!—*Edinburgh Literary Journal*, 1829.

NANNY WELSH, THE MINISTER’S MAID.

BY DANIEL GORRIE.

THERE are now—so far at least as my experience goes—fewer specimens of homely, odd, and eccentric characters to be met with in Scotland than in former years. In solitary nooks of the country, away from the boom of cities, and the rush of railways, many doubtless still exist, and contribute largely to the amusement of their rural acquaint-

ances; but it cannot be denied that the race of originals is fast disappearing, and threatens ultimately to become altogether extinct. Into the cause or causes of this I do not intend to enter; it is sufficient to chronicle the melancholy fact. There may be a beauty in similarity, but there is a higher beauty in diversity. Men and women are now so

very much alike, that the study of mankind is not such a difficult task after all. The greater facilities for intercourse which the present generation enjoys have tended to rub off the angularities of individual character, and to create a fusion, or confusion, of all classes in the community. Such being the case, it is pleasant at times to revert from the present to the past, and to recall the peculiar aspect, the odd sayings, and eccentric doings of persons with whom we were familiar in former years.

Among a number of others, Nanny Welsh stands prominent in my recollection. She was maid-of-all-work in the old home-manse of Keppel, where I first saw the light of day, and for many years afterwards. A rare specimen Nanny was of the departed or departing race of familiar domestics. She had herded the cows of neighbouring farmers, almost from her childhood, until she entered upon domestic service, and she had well nigh attained the prime of life before she became minister's maid, an honour which she highly esteemed and long enjoyed. She was big-boned and masculine in the build of her body. Her face was long and hard, almost grim, and well freckled, and deeply browned by frequent exposure to the sun and air. A white "mutch," with a high horse-shoe shaped crown, surmounted her head at morning, noon, and night. With her gown tucked up behind in the old familiar fashion of domestics, and a youngster strapped on her back with a shawl, and peering with his little "pow" over her shoulders, she went to work, as if the fate of empires, not to speak of the honour of the old manse, depended upon her exertions. She used to boast that she could "pit mair through her hands in an hour than ony ither woman i' the parish." She was, in truth, a capital worker; and while her hands went her tongue wagged. Nanny could never endure either to be idle or silent. When engaged in

scrubbing pots and pans, the bairn on her back was not forgotten, but received all the benefit of her sayings and soliloquies. In the discharge of her domestic duties she liked to carry everything her own way, and generally managed to take it, whatever orders might be given to the contrary.

This good woman had the welfare of the family at heart, and a great favourite she was amongst us youngsters, although she had a very summary mode of disposing of us sometimes when we attempted to tease her or became unruly. I remember well an advice she gave us, on more than one occasion, when we were invited out to juvenile tea-parties in the neighbourhood. "Noo, bairns," she would say, after our faces were scrubbed, and our hair was smoothed, "see an' eat weel when ye're at it, an' no come hame garavishin' an' eatin'." We not unfrequently paid the penalty next day of adhering too strictly to the letter of this advice; but when children see heaps of buns, cookies, and short-bread piled up on the table, who can blame them if they take no thought of the morrow? Nanny used to relate with great glee a saying of one of us manse bairns. It was the custom at the communion season in those days (and it may be the custom in some places still) for the wealthier members of country congregations to send the minister some substantial present for the bodily benefit of his officiating friends. One of us, standing at the garden gate, had seen an expected arrival approaching, and running with breathless haste to the kitchen, had exclaimed—"Nanny, Nanny! here's a salmon comin'—this is the *rale sacrament!*" Nanny, honest woman, never forgot the sentiment, and often repeated it to the discomfiture of its juvenile author.

In the fulness of time, and when our domestic seemed doomed to a life of single blessedness, a wooer at last ap-

peared in the person of Peter Pearson, the pensioner. Peter had lost his wife; and six months after her decease, he came to the conclusion that it is not good—that it is utterly uncomfortable, in fact—for man to be alone. And so he looked favourably upon Nanny Welsh, admired her proportions, estimated her energy at its true value, and finally managed to make his way into the manse kitchen of an evening. It must have cost him a considerable effort to effect this at first, as he regarded the minister with great awe. Peter had been in the artillery force. He had served in Spain and South America, and returned home, not disabled, but “dull of hearing,” to enjoy his hard-won pension. He was a quiet and stolid, but kind-hearted man. He was very uncommunicative as regarded his military service and exploits. It was impossible to force or coax him to “fight his battles o'er again” by the fireside. Whether it was owing to want of narrative power, or to some dark remembrance that overshadowed his mind, Peter invariably maintained discreet silence when soldiers and war became the topics of conversation. On one occasion he was asked if he had ever been at Chili, and his answer was, “I've been at Gibraltar at ony rate!” This sounds somewhat like the reply of the smart youth who, when it was inquired of him, if he had ever been in Paris, quickly responded, “No; but my brother has been to Crail!”

The wooing of Peter Pearson, pensioner, and Nanny Welsh, spinster, might have formed a new era in the history of courtship. No sighs were heard. No side-long, loving glances passed between them. There was no tremulous pressure of the hands, or tingling touch of meeting lips. Peter was “senselessly ceevil,” although, I verily believe, if he had attempted to kiss Nanny she would have brained him on the spot with the beetle, and

left the warrior to die ingloriously on the hearthstone. No, they did not wish to make “auld fules” of themselves. They wooed in their own way, and understood each other perfectly well. Peter sat by the hearth, smoking his twist peacefully, and squirting out the juice as he had done at camp-fires in former years; and Nanny went about cleaning dishes, lifting tables, and arranging chairs, and only exchanging occasional words with her future husband. She was never so talkative when Peter was present as when he was absent. It was only on rare occasions that she ventured to sit down on a chair beside him. She seemed always afraid of being caught doing anything so indecorous in the manse kitchen. I scarcely think that Peter required to propose. It was a tacit understanding, and their marriage-day was fixed, apparently, by mutual uncommunicated arrangement.

On the night before the bridal some of the neighbouring domestics and other women invaded the kitchen, and subjected Nanny to the painful pleasure of feet-washing—a ceremony somewhat different from the annual performance at Vienna. She kicked furiously at first, calling her tormentors impudent hizzies and limmers; but she was compelled at last to succumb, and yielded with more reluctance than grace.

The marriage was celebrated quietly in the manse next day, and the youngest of the family sat crowing on Nanny's knee, while she was being told the sum and substance of her duties as a wife. No sooner was the ceremony concluded, than she tucked up her wedding gown, and expressed her desire and determination to “see a' things putten richt i' the kitchen afore she gaed awa'.” Peter had leased a cottage in a little way-side village, about two miles distant from the manse, and this was the extent of their marriage jaunt. No doubt the evening would be spent

hilariously by their friends and acquaintances, who would drink the health of the "happy pair" with overflowing bumpers.

Peter and Nanny lived very happily together, although "the gray mare was the better horse." She continued to be as industrious as ever, and the pensioner managed to eke out his government pay by what is called, in some parts of the country, "orra wark." Nanny came regularly every Sabbath to the manse between sermons, and took pot-luck with the family. We were always glad to see her, and hear her invariable, "Losh, laddie, is that you?" Many a time and oft we all visited her cottage in a body, and what glorious teas she used to give us! Still do I remember, and not without stomachic regrets, the mountains of bannocks, the hills of cakes, the hillocks of cookies, the ridges of butter, the red congealed pools of jelly, and the three tea-spoonfuls of sugar in each cup! It was a never-to-be-forgotten treat. Compare Nanny's tea-parties with the fashionable "cookey-shines" of the present generation! But, soft; that way madness lies! The good woman had a garden too; and how we youngsters pitched into her carrots, currants, and gooseberries, or rather, to speak correctly, pitched them into ourselves. We remembered her own advice about not returning home "garavishin' and eatin'." She prided herself greatly upon her powers of pig-feeding, and next to the pleasure of seeing us feasting like locusts was the delight she experienced in contemplating, with folded arms, her precious pig devouring its meal of potatoes and greens. "Isn't it a bonny beastie? —did you ever see sic a bonny beastie?" she would frequently exclaim. I never saw so much affection bestowed before or since upon the lowest of the lower animals. The pig knew her perfectly well, and responded to her laudatory phrases by complacent grunts. Between Peter and the pig, I am verily

persuaded, she led a happier life than imperial princes in their palaces. No little artilleryman ever made his appearance to disturb the harmony of the house by tying crackers to the cat's tail.

Nanny's first visit to Edinburgh formed a rare episode in her life. This happened a good many years after her marriage. The ride on the top of the coach through the kingdom of Fife, she described as "fearsome;" and the horses dashing up hill and down, excited her liveliest compassion. When asked how she felt after her sail between Kirkcaldy and Leith (the day was pleasant and the water smooth), her reply was—"Wonnerfu'—wonnerfu' weel, after sic a voyage!" The streets of the city, the high houses, the multitudinous shops, and the crowds of people, excited her rustic astonishment beyond all bounds. "Is't a market the day?" she would interject—"whaur's a' the folk gaun?" Her own appearance on the pavement attracted the notice of passers-by; and no wonder. Figure a big-boned, ungainly woman, with long, freckled face and open mouth, and dressed in defiance of the fashion of the time, striding up the Bridges, and "glowering" into everybody's face, as if she expected to see her "aunty's second cousin"—figure such a person, and you will form a respectable picture of Nanny Welsh, alias Mrs Pearson, as she appeared many years ago on the streets of Modern Athens. She could never go out alone from the house where she was staying without losing herself. Once she went to the shop next door, and it took her an hour to find the way back again. On another occasion, when she had taken a longer trip than usual, she went completely off her reckoning, forgot the name of the street, mistook the part of the town, and asked every person she met, gentle or simple, swells or sweeps, "Gin they kent whaur Mrs So-and-so stopit!" I never learned correctly how

she got out of that scrape. All she could say was that “a ceevil man brocht her to the bottom o’ the stair.” She was perfectly dumfounded when she saw and heard that the people of Edinburgh had to buy the “bits o’ sticks” with which they kindled their fires in the morning. She protested that she could bring “a barrowfu’ o’ rosy roots frae the wuds that would keep her chimley gaun for a fortnicht.” Going to the market to buy vegetables she looked upon as perfectly preposterous. “Flingin’ awa,” she would say, “gude white saxpences an’ shillin’s for neeps, carrots, ingans, an’ kail—it beats a’!”

The open-mouthed wonder of Nanny reached its height when one night, after long and urgent solicitation, she was persuaded to go under good protection to the Theatre Royal. Mackay was then in the zenith of his fame, and attracted crowded houses, more especially by his unique representation of Bailie Nicol Jarvie. Nanny was taken to the pit. The blaze of light, the galleries rising one above another, the gaily-dressed ladies, the sea of faces surging from floor to roof, the whistling, hooting, and laughing—all these mingled together produced a bewildering effect upon the poor woman, and her bewilderment increased as the curtain rose and the play proceeded. She was speechless for about an hour—she did nothing but gape and gaze. A human being suddenly transported into some brilliant and magical hall, or into another world, could scarcely have betrayed more abject astonishment. At last her wonder found vent, and she exclaimed in the hearing, and much to

the amusement, of those who surrounded her—“Tak me awa—tak me awa—this is no place for me—I’m just Peter Pearson’s ain wife!” She would not be persuaded to remain even when the Bailie kept the house dissolved in loosened laughter. The idea seemed to be strong in her mind that the people were all laughing at *her*. She was the best actress, although the most unconscious one, in the whole house. What a capital pair the Bailie and Nanny would have made! She would have beat Miss Nicol. Her first appearance on the stage would have been a perfect triumph—it would have secured the fame and fortune of Mrs Pearson. Nanny never liked to be asked her opinion of the Edinburgh theatre. She only shook her head, and appeared to regard it as something akin to Pandemonium.

Nanny’s stories about the sayings and doings of the Edinburgh people served her for fireside talk many a winter evening after she returned home to Peter Pearson. Peter, who had seen more of the world, used to take a quiet chuckle to himself when she finished her description of some “ferlie” that had excited her astonishment or admiration. The gilded wonders above shop doors—the Highlanders taking pinches of snuff—the wool-packs—the great glittering spectacles—the rams’ heads and horns—these had excited her rustic curiosity almost as much as they attract the interest of a child. Poor honest Nanny! she has now slept for years where the “rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep,” and Peter, after life’s fitful fever, sleeps well by her side.—*Pax Vobiscum!*

LADY JEAN:

A TALE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.

The Yerl o' Wigton had three daughters,
 O braw walie ! they were bonnie !
 The youngest o' them and the bonniest too,
 Has fallen in love wi' Richie Storie.

Old Ballad.

THE Earl of Wigton, whose name figures in Scottish annals of the reign of Charles II., had three daughters, named Lady Frances, Lady Grizel, and Lady Jean,—the last being by several years the youngest, and by many degrees the most beautiful. All the three usually resided with their mother at the chief seat of the family, Cumbernauld House, in Stirlingshire; but the two eldest were occasionally permitted to attend their father in Edinburgh, in order that they might have some chance of obtaining lovers at the court held there by the Duke of Lauderdale, while Lady Jean was kept constantly at home, and debarred from the society of the capital, lest her superior beauty might interfere with and foil the attractions of her sisters, who, according to the notion of that age, had a sort of "right of primogeniture" in matrimony, as well as in what was called "heirship."

It may be easily imagined that, while the two marriageable ladies were enjoying all the delights of a third flat in one of the "closes" of the Canongate, spending their days in seeing beaux, and their nights in dreaming of them, Lady Jean led no pleasant life amidst the remote and solitary splendour of Cumbernauld, where her chief employment was the disagreeable one of attending her mother, a very infirm and querulous old dame, much given (it was said) to strong waters. At the period when our tale opens, Lady Jean's charms, though never seen in the capital, had begun to make some noise

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there; and the curiosity excited respecting them amongst the juvenile party of the vice-regal court, had induced Lord Wigton to confine her ladyship even more strictly than heretofore, lest perchance some gallant might make a pilgrimage to his country seat, in order to behold her, and from less to more, induce her to quit her retirement, in such a way as would effectually discomfit his schemes for the pre-advancement of his elder daughters. He had been at pains to send an express to Cumbernauld, ordering Lady Jean to be confined to the precincts of the house and the terrace-garden, and to be closely attended in all her movements by a trusty domestic. The consequence was that the young lady complained most piteously to her deaf old lady-mother of the tedium and listlessness of her life, and wished with all her heart that she was as ugly, old, and happy as her sisters.

Lord Wigton was not insensible to the cruelty of his policy, however well he might be convinced of its advantage and necessity. He loved his youngest daughter more than the rest; and it was only in obedience to what he conceived to be the commands of duty, that he subjected her to the restraint. His lordship, therefore, felt anxious to alleviate in some measure the *désagréments* of her solitary confinement; and knowing her to be fond of music, he had sent to her by the last messenger a theorbo lute, with which he thought she would be able to amuse herself in a way very much to her mind,—not consider-

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ing that, as she could not play upon the instrument, it would be little better to her than an unmeaning toy. By the return of his messenger, he received a letter from Lady Jean, thanking him for the theorbo, but making him aware of his oversight, and begging him to send some person who could teach her to play.

The earl, whose acquirements in the philosophy of politics had never been questioned, felt ashamed of having committed such a solecism in so trivial a matter ; and like all men anxious to repair or conceal an error in judgment, immediately ran into another of ten times greater consequence and magnitude : he gratified his daughter in her wish.

The gentry of Scotland were at that time in the custom of occasionally employing a species of servants, whose accomplishments and duties would now appear of a very anomalous character, though at that time naturally arising from the peculiar situation of this country, in respect to its southern neighbour. They were, in general, humble men who had travelled a good deal, and acquired many foreign accomplishments ; who, returning to their native country after an absence of a few years, usually entered into the service of the higher class of families, partly as ordinary livery-men, and partly with the purpose of instructing the youth of both sexes, as they grew up and required such exercises, in dancing, music, writing, &c., besides a vast variety of other arts, comprehended in the general phrase of “breeding.” Though these men received much higher wages, and were a thousand times more unmanageable than common serving men, they served a good purpose in those days, when young people had scarcely any other opportunities of acquiring the ornamental branches of education, except by going abroad.

It so happened, that not many days

after Lord Wigton received his daughter's letter, he was applied to for employment by one of these useful personages, a tall and handsome youth, apparently five-and-twenty, with dark, Italian-looking features, a slight moustache, and as much foreign peculiarity in his dress as indicated that he was just returned from his travels. After putting a few questions, his lordship discovered that the youth was possessed of many agreeable accomplishments ; was, in particular, perfectly well qualified to teach the theorbo, and had no objection to entering the service of a young lady of quality, only with the proviso that he was to be spared the disgrace of a livery. Lord Wigton then made no scruple in engaging him for a certain period ; and next day saw the youth on the way to Cumbernauld, with a letter from his lordship to Lady Jean, setting forth all his good qualities, and containing among other endearing expressions, a hope that she would both benefit by his instructions, and be in the meantime content on their account with her present residence.

Any occurrence at Cumbernauld of higher import than the breaking of a needle in embroidering, or the mis-carriage of a brewing of currant-wine, would have been quite an incident in the eyes of Lady Jean ; and even to have given alms at the castle-gate to an extraordinary beggar, or to see so much as a “stranger” in the candle, might have supplied her with amusement infinite, and speculation boundless. What, then, must have been her delight, when the goodly and youthful figure of Richard Storie alighted one dull summer afternoon at the gate, and when the credentials he presented disclosed to her the agreeable purpose of his mission ! Her joy knew no bounds ; nor did she know in what terms to welcome the stranger ; she ran from one end of the house to the other, up stairs and down stairs, in search of she

knew not what ; and finally, in her transports, she shook her mother out of a drunken slumber, which the old lady was enjoying as usual in her large chair in the parlour.

Master Richard, as he was commonly designated, soon found himself comfortably established in the good graces of the whole household of Cumbernauld, and not less so in the particular favour of his young mistress. Even the sour old lady of the large chair was pleased with his handsome appearance, and was occasionally seen to give a preternatural nod and smile at some of his musical exhibitions, as much as to say she knew when he performed well, and was willing to encourage humble merit. As for Lady Jean, whose disposition was equally lively and generous, she could not express, in sufficiently warm terms, her admiration of his performances, or the delight she experienced from them. Nor was she ever content without having Master Richard in her presence, either to play himself, or to teach her the enchanting art. She was a most apt scholar—so apt, that in a few days she was able to accompany him with the theorbo and voice, while he played upon an ancient harpsichord belonging to the old lady, which he had rescued from a lumber room, and had been at some pains to repair. The exclusive preference thus given to music for the time threw his other accomplishments into the shade, while it, moreover, occasioned his more constant presence in the apartments of the ladies than he would have been otherwise entitled to. The consequence was, that in a short time he almost ceased to be looked upon as a servant, and began gradually to assume the more interesting character of a friend and equal.

It was Lady Jean's practice to take a walk, prescribed by her father, every day in the garden, on which occasions the countess conceived herself as acting up to the letter of her husband's com-

mands, when she ordered Master Richard to attend his pupil. This arrangement was exceedingly agreeable to Lady Jean, as they sometimes took out the theorbo, and added music to the pleasures of the walk. Another out-of-doors amusement, in which music formed a chief part, was suggested to them by the appropriate frontispiece of a book of instruction for the theorbo, which Master Richard had brought with him from Edinburgh. This engraving represented a beautiful young shepherdess, dressed in the fashionable costume of that period : a stupendous tower of hair hung round with diamonds, and a voluminous silk gown with a jewel-adorned stomacher, a theorbo in her arms, and a crook by her side,—sitting on a flowery bank under a tree, with sheep planted at regular distances around her. At a little distance appeared a shepherd with dressed hair, long-skirted coat, and silk stockings, who seemed to survey his mistress with a languishing air of admiration, that appeared singularly ridiculous as contrasted with the coquettish and contemptuous aspect of the lady. The plate referred to a particular song in the book, entitled “A Dialogue betwixt Strephon and Lydia ; or the proud Shepherdess's Courtship,” the music of which was exceedingly beautiful, while the verses were the tamest and most affected trash imaginable.

It occurred to Lady Jean's lively fancy, that if she and her teacher were to personify the shepherdess and shepherd, and thus, as it were, to transform the song to a sort of opera, making the terrace-garden the scene, not a little amusement might be added to the pleasure she experienced from the mere music alone. This fancy was easily reduced to execution ; for, by seating herself under a tree, in her ordinary dress, with the horticultural implement called a rake by her side, she looked the very Lydia of the copperplate ; while Richard, standing at his customary respectful dis-

tance, with his handsome person and somewhat foreign apparel, was a sufficiently good representation of Strephon. After arranging themselves thus, Master Richard opened the drama by addressing Lady Jean in the first verse of the song, which contained, besides some description of sunrise, a comparison between the beauties of nature, at that delightful period, and the charms of Lydia, the superiority being of course awarded to the latter. Lady Jean, with the help of the theorbo, replied to this in a very disdainful style, affecting to hold the compliments of lovers very cheap, and asseverating that she had no regard for any being on earth besides her father and mother, and no care but for these dear innocent sheep (here she looked kindly aside upon a neighbouring bed of cabbages), which they had entrusted to her charge. Other verses of similar nonsense succeeded, during which the representative of the fair Lydia could not help feeling rather more emotion at hearing the ardent addresses of Strephon than was strictly consistent with her part.

At last it was her duty to rise and walk softly away from her swain, declaring herself utterly insensible to both his praises and his passion, and her resolution never again to see or speak to him. This she did in admirable style, though perhaps rather with the dignified gait and sweeping majesty of a tragedy-queen, than with anything like the pettish or sullen strut of a disdainful rustic. Meanwhile, Strephon was supposed to be left inconsolable. Her ladyship continued to support her assumed character for a few yards, till a turn of the walk concealed her from Master Richard ; when, resuming her natural manner, she turned back, with sparkling eyes, in order to ask his opinion of her performance, and it was with some confusion, and no little surprise, that on bursting again into his sight, she discovered that Richard had not yet thrown off his character. He was standing still as she had

left him, fixed immovably upon the spot in an attitude expressive of sorrow for her departure, and bending forward as if imploring her return. It was the expression of his face that astonished her most ; for it was not at all an expression appropriate to either his own character or to that which he had assumed. It was an expression of earnest and impassioned admiration ; his whole soul seemed thrown into her face, which was directed towards her, or rather the place where she had disappeared ; and his eyes were projected in the same direction, with such a look as that perhaps of an enraptured saint of old at the moment when a divinity parted from his presence. This lasted, however, but for a moment, for scarcely had that minute space of time elapsed before Richard, startled from his reverie by Lady Jean's sudden return, dismissed from his face all trace of any extraordinary expression, and stood before her, endeavouring to appear, just what he was, her ladyship's respectful servant and teacher. Nevertheless, this transformation did not take place so quickly as to prevent her ladyship from observing the present expression, nor was it accomplished with such address as to leave her room for passing it over as unobserved. She was surprised—she hesitated—she seemed, in spite of herself, conscious of something awkward—and finally she blushed slightly. Richard caught the contagion of her confusion in a double degree ; and Lady Jean again became more confused on observing that he was aware of her confusion. Richard was the first to recover himself and speak. He made some remarks upon her singing and acting—not, however, upon her admirable performance of the latter part of the drama ; this encouraged her also to speak, and both soon became somewhat composed. Shortly afterwards they returned to the house ; but from that moment a chain of the most delicate, yet indissoluble sympathies began to connect the hearts of

these youthful beings, so alike in all natural qualities, and so dissimilar in every extraneous thing which the world is accustomed to value.

After this interview there took place a slight estrangement between Master Richard and Lady Jean that lasted a few days, during which they had much less of conversation and music than for some time before. Both observed this circumstance ; but each ascribed it to accident, while it was in reality occasioned by mutual reserve. Master Richard was afraid that Lady Jean might be offended were he to propose anything like a repetition of the garden drama ; and Lady Jean, on her part, could not, consistently with the rules of maidenly modesty, utter even a hint at such a thing, however she might secretly wish or long for it. The very consciousness, reciprocally felt, of having something on their minds, of which neither durst speak, was sufficient to produce this reserve, even though the emotions of the “tender passion” had not come in, as they did, for a large share of the cause.

At length, however, this reserve was so far softened down, that they began to resume their former practice of walking together in the garden ; but, though the theorbo continued to make one of the party, no more operatic performances took place. Nevertheless, the mutual affection which had taken root in their hearts, experienced on this account no abatement, but, on the contrary, continued to increase.

As for Master Richard, it was no wonder that he should be deeply smitten with the charms of his mistress ; for, ever as he stole a long, furtive glance at her graceful form, he thought he had never seen in Spain or Italy any such specimens of female loveliness ; and (if we may let the reader so far into the secret) he had indeed come to Cumbernauld with the very purpose of falling in love.

Different causes had operated upon Lady Jean. Richard being the first love-worthy object she had seen since the period when the female heart becomes most susceptible,—the admiration with which she knew he beheld her,—his musical accomplishments, which had tended so much to her gratification,—all conspired to render him precious in her sight. In the words of a beautiful modern ballad, “all impulses of soul and sense had thrilled” her gentle and guileless heart—

—hopes, and fears that kindled hopes,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes, long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long,

had exercised their tender and delightful influence over her ; like a flower thrown upon one of the streams of her own native land, whose course was through the beauties, the splendours, and the terrors of nature, she was borne away in a dream, the magic scenery of which was alternately pleasing, fearful, and glorious, and from which she could no more awake than could the flower restrain its course on the gliding waters. The habit of contemplating her lover every day, and that in the dignified character of an instructor, gradually blinded her in a great measure to his humbler quality, and to the probable sentiments of her father and the world upon the subject of her passion. If by any chance such a consideration was forced upon her notice, and she found occasion to tremble lest the sentiments in which she was so luxuriously indulging should end in disgrace and disaster, she soon quieted her fears, by reverting to an idea which had lately occurred to her, namely, that *Richard was not what he seemed*. She had heard and read of love assuming strange disguises. A Lord Belhaven, in the immediately preceding period of the civil war, had taken refuge from the fury of Cromwell in the service of an English nobleman, whose daughter’s heart he won under the

disguise of a gardener, and whom, on the recurrence of better times, he carried home to Scotland as his lady. This story was then quite popular, and at least one of the parties still survived to attest its truth. But even in nursery tales Lady Jean could find examples which justified her own passion. The vilest animals, she knew, on finding some beautiful dame, who was so disinterested as to fall in love with them, usually turned out to be the most handsome princes that ever were seen, who invariably married and made happy the ladies whose affection had restored them to their natural form and just inheritance. "Who knows," she thought, "but Richard may some day, in a transport of passion, throw open his coat, exhibit the star of nobility glittering on his breast, and ask me to become a countess!"

Such are the excuses which love suggests to reason, and which the reason of lovers easily accepts; while those who are neither youthful nor in love wonder at the hallucination of their impassioned juniors. Experience soon teaches us that this world is not one of romance, and that few incidents in life ever occur out of the ordinary way. But before we acquire this experience by actual observation, we all of us regard things in a very different light. The truth seems to be that, in the eyes of youth, "the days of chivalry" do not appear to be gone; our ideas are then contemporary, or on a par with the early romantic ages of the world; and it is only by mingling with mature men, and looking at things as they are, that we at length advance towards, and ultimately settle down in the *real era* of our existence. Was there ever yet a youth who did not feel some chivalrous impulses,—some thirst for more glorious scenes than those around him,—some aspirations after lofty passion and supreme excellence—or who did not cherish some first-

love that could not prudentially be gratified?

The greater part of the rest of the summer passed away before the lovers came to an *eclaircissement*; and such, indeed, was their mutual reserve upon the subject, that had it not been for the occurrence of a singular and deciding circumstance, there appeared little probability of this ever otherwise taking place. The Earl of Home, a gay and somewhat foolish young nobleman, one morning, after attending a convivial party, where the charms of Lady Jean Fleming formed the principal topic of discourse, left Edinburgh, and took the way to Cumbernauld, on the very pilgrimage, and with the very purpose, which Lord Wigton had before anticipated. Resolved first to see, then to love, and lastly to run away with the young lady, his lordship skulked about for a few days, and at last had the pleasure of seeing the hidden beauty over the garden-wall, as she was walking with Master Richard. He thought he had never seen any lady who could be at all compared to Lady Jean, and, as a matter of course, resolved to make her his own, and surprise all his companions at Edinburgh with his success and her beauty. He watched again next day, and happening to meet Master Richard out of the bounds of Cumbernauld policy, accosted him, with the intention of securing his services in making his way towards Lady Jean. After a few words of course, he proposed the subject to Richard, and offered a considerable bribe, to induce him to work for his interest. Richard at first rejected the offer, but immediately after, on bethinking himself, saw fit to accept it. He was to mention his lordship's purpose to Lady Jean, and to prepare the way for a private interview with her. On the afternoon of the succeeding day, he was to meet Lord Home at the same place, and tell him how Lady Jean had received his proposals. With this they

parted—Richard to muse on this unexpected circumstance, which he saw might blast all his hopes, unless he should resolve upon prompt and active measures, and the Earl of Home to enjoy himself at the humble inn of the village of Cumbernauld, where he had for the last few days enacted the character of “the daft lad frae Edinburgh, that seemed to hae mair siller than sense.”

On the morning of the tenth day after Master Richard’s first interview with Lord Home, that faithful serving-man found himself jogging swiftly along the road to Edinburgh, mounted on a stout nag, with the fair Lady Jean seated comfortably on a pillion behind him. It was a fine morning in autumn, and the road had a peculiarly gay appearance from the multitude of country people, mounted and dismounted, who seemed also hastening towards the capital. Master Richard, upon inquiry, discovered that it was the “market-day,” a circumstance which seemed favourable to his design, by the additional assurance it gave him of not being recognised among the extraordinary number of strangers who might be expected to crowd the city on such an occasion.

The lovers approached the city by the west, and the first street they entered was the suburban one called Portsburgh, which leads towards the great market-place of Edinburgh. Here Richard, impatient as he was, found himself obliged, like many other rustic cavaliers, to reduce the pace of his horse to a walk, on account of the narrowness and crowded state of the street. This he felt the more disagreeable, as it subjected him and his interesting companion to the close and leisurely scrutiny of the inhabitants. Both had endeavoured to disguise everything remarkable in their appearance, so far as dress and demeanour could be disguised ; yet, as Lady Jean could

not conceal her extraordinary beauty, and Richard had not found it possible to part with a slight and dearly beloved moustache, it naturally followed that they were honoured with a good deal of staring. Many an urchin upon the street threw up his arms as they passed along, exclaiming, “Oh ! the black-bearded man !” or, “Oh ! the bonnie leddie !”—the men all admired Lady Jean, the women Master Richard—and many an old shoemaker ogled them earnestly over his half-door, with his spectacles pushed up above his dingy cowl. The lovers, who had thus to run a sort of gauntlet of admiration and remark, were glad when they reached an inn, which Richard, who was slightly acquainted with the town, knew to be a proper place for the performance of a “half-merk marriage.”

They alighted, and were civilly received by an obsequious landlady, who conducted them into an apartment at the back of the house. There Lady Jean was for a short time left to make some arrangements about her dress, while Richard disclosed to the landlady in another room the purpose upon which he was come to her house, and consulted her about procuring a clergyman. The dame of the house, to whom a clandestine marriage was the merest matter of course, showed the utmost willingness to facilitate the design of her guests, and said that she believed a clerical official might be procured in a few minutes, provided that neither had any scruples of conscience, as “most part o’ foul frae the west had,” in accepting the services of an episcopal clergyman. The lover assured her that so far from having any objection to a “government minister” (for so they were sometimes termed), he would prefer such to any other, as both he and his bride belonged to that persuasion. The landlady heard this declaration with complacency, which showed that she

loved her guests the better for it, and told Richard, that if he pleased, she would immediately introduce him to the Dean of St Giles, who, honest man, was just now taking his "meridian" in the little back garret-parlour, along with his friend and gossip, Bowed Andrew, the waiter of the West Port. To this Richard joyfully assented, and speedily he and Lady Jean were joined in their room by the said Dean,—a squat little gentleman, with a drunken but important-looking face, and an air of consequentiality even in his stagger that was partly imposing and partly ridiculous. He addressed his clients with a patronizing simper, of which the effect was grievously disconcerted by an unlucky hiccup, and in a speech which might have had the intended tone of paternal and reverend authority, had it not been

smattered and degraded into shreds by the crapulous insufficiency of his tongue. Richard cut short his ill-sustained attempts at dignity by requesting him to partake of some liquor. His reverence almost leaped at the proffered jug, which contained ale. He first took a tasting, then a sip—shaking his head between—next a small draught, with a still more convulsion-like shake of the head; and, lastly, he took a hearty and persevering swill, from the effects of which his lungs did not recover for at least twenty respirations. The impatient lover then begged him to proceed with the ceremony; which he forthwith commenced in presence of the landlady and the above-mentioned Bowed Andrew; and in a few minutes Richard and Lady Jean were united in the holy bonds of matrimony.

CHAPTER II.

WHEN the ceremony was concluded, and both the clergyman and the witnesses had been satisfied and dismissed, the lovers left the house, with the design of walking forward into the city. In conformity to a previous arrangement, Lady Jean walked first, like a lady of quality, and Richard followed closely behind, with the dress and deportment of her servant. Her ladyship was dressed in her finest suit, and adorned with her finest jewels, all of which she had brought from Cumbernauld on purpose, in a mail or leathern trunk—for such was the name then given to the convenience now entitled a portmanteau. Her step was light, and her bearing gay, as she moved along; not on account of the success which had attended her expedition, or her satisfaction in being now united to the man of her choice, but because she anticipated the highest pleasure in the sight of a place whereof she had heard such wonderful stories, and from a participation in whose

delights she had been so long withheld.

Like all persons educated in the country, she had been regaled in her childhood with magnificent descriptions of the capital—of its buildings, that seemed to mingle with the clouds—its shops, which apparently contained more wealth than all the world beside—of its paved streets (for paved streets were then wonders in Scotland)—and, above all, of the grand folks that thronged its Highgates, its Canongates, and its Cowgates—people whose lives seemed a perpetual holiday, whose attire was ever new, and who all lived in their several palaces.

Though, of course, Edinburgh had then little to boast of, the country people who occasionally visited it did not regard it with less admiration than that with which the peasantry of our own day may be supposed to view it, now that it is something so very different. It was then, as well as now, the

capital of the country, and, as such, bore the same disproportion in point of magnificence to inferior towns, and to the country in general. In one respect it was superior to what it is in the present day, namely, in being the seat of government and of a court. Lady Jean had often heard all its glorious peculiarities described by her sisters, who, moreover, took occasion to colour the picture too highly, in order to raise her envy, and make themselves appear great in their alliance and association with so much greatness. She was, therefore, prepared to see a scene of the utmost splendour—a scene in which nothing horrible or paltry mingled, but which was altogether calculated to awe or to delight the senses.

Her ladyship was destined to be disappointed at the commencement, at least, of her acquaintance with the city. The first remarkable object which struck her eye, after leaving the inn, was the high “bow,” or arch, of the gate called the West Port. In this itself there was nothing worthy of particular attention, and she rather directed her eyes through the opening beneath, which half disclosed a wide space beyond, apparently crowded with people. But when she came close up to the gate, and cast, before passing, a last glance at the arch, she shuddered at the sight then presented to her eyes. On the very pinnacle of the arch was stuck the ghastly and weather-worn remains of a human head, the features of which, half flesh, half bone, were shaded and rendered still more indistinctly horrible by the long dark hair, which hung in meagre tresses around them.

“Oh, Richard, Richard!” she exclaimed, stopping and turning round, “what is that dreadful-looking thing?”

“That, madam,” said Richard, without any emotion, “is the broken remnant of a west country preacher, spiked up there to warn his countrymen who may approach this port, against doing

anything to incur the fate which has overtaken himself. Methinks he has preached to small purpose, for yonder stands the gallows, ready, I suppose, to bring him some brother in affliction.”

“Horrible!” exclaimed Lady Jean; “and is this really the fine town of Edinburgh, where I was taught to expect so many grand sights? I thought it was just one universal palace, and it turns out to be a great charnel-house!”

“It is indeed more like that than anything else at times,” said Richard; “but, my dear Lady Jean, you are not going to start at this bugbear, which the very children, you see, do not heed in passing.”

“Indeed, I think, Richard,” answered her ladyship, “if Edinburgh is to be at all like this, it would be just as good to turn back at once, and postpone our visit to better times.”

“But it is not all like this,” replied Richard; “I assure you it is not. For Heaven’s sake, my lady, move on. The people are beginning to stare at us. You shall soon see grand sights enough, if we were once fairly out of this place. Make for the opposite corner of the Grassmarket, and ascend the street to the left of that horrible gibbet. We may yet get past it before the criminals are produced.”

Thus admonished, Lady Jean passed, not without a shudder, under the dreadful arch, and entered the spacious oblong square called the Grassmarket. This place was crowded at the west end with rustics engaged in all the bustle of a grain and cattle market, and at the eastern and most distant extremity, with a mob of idlers, who had gathered around the gibbet in order to witness the awful ceremony that was about to take place. The crowd, which was scarcely so dense as that which attends the rarer scene of a modern execution, made way on both sides for Lady Jean as she moved along; and wherever she went, she left behind her a “wake,” as

it were, of admiration and confusion. So exquisite and so new a beauty, so splendid a suit of female attire, and so stout and handsome an attendant—these were all calculated to inspire reverence in the minds of the beholders. Her carriage at the same time was so stately and so graceful, that no one could be so rude as to interrupt or disturb it. The people, therefore, parted when she approached, and left a free passage for her on all sides, as if she had been an angel or a spirit come to walk amidst a mortal crowd, and whose person could not be touched, and might scarcely be beheld—whose motions were not to be interfered with by those among whom she chose to walk—but who was to be received with prostration of spirit, and permitted to depart as she had come, unquestioned and unapproached. In traversing the Grass-market, two or three young coxcombs, with voluminous wigs, short cloaks, rapiers, and rose-knots at their knees and shoes, who, on observing her at a distance, had prepared to treat her with a condescending stare, fell back, awed and confounded, at her near approach, and spent the gaze, perhaps, upon the humbler mark of her follower, or upon vacancy.

Having at length passed the gibbet, Lady Jean began to ascend the steep and tortuous street denominated the West Bow. She had hitherto been unable to direct any attention to what she was most anxious to behold,—the scenic wonders of the capital. But having now got clear of the crowd, and no longer fearing to see the gallows, she ventured to lift up her eyes and look around. The tallness and massiveness of the buildings, some of which bore the cross of the Knights Templar on their pinnacles, while others seemed to be surmounted or overtopped by still taller edifices beyond, impressed her imagination; and the effect was rendered still more striking by the countless

human figures which crowded the windows, and even the roofs of the houses, all alike bending their attention, as she thought, towards herself. The scene before her looked like an amphitheatre filled with spectators, while she and Richard seemed as the objects upon the arena. The thought caused her to hurry on, and she soon found herself in a great measure screened from observation by the overhanging projections of the narrower part of the West Bow, which she now entered.

With slow and difficult, but stately and graceful steps, she then proceeded, till she reached the upper angle of the street, where a novel and unexpected scene awaited her. A sound like that of rushing waters seemed first to proceed from the part of the street still concealed from her view, and presently appeared round the angle, the first rank of an impetuous crowd, which, rushing downward with prodigious force, would certainly have overwhelmed her delicate form, had she not dexterously avoided them, by stepping aside upon a projecting stair, to which Richard also sprung just in time to save himself from a similar fate. From this place of safety, which was not without its own crowd of children, women, and sage-looking elderly mechanics, with Kilmarnock cowls, they in the next moment saw the massive mob rush past, like the first wave of a flood, bearing either along or down everything that came in their way. Immediately after, but at a more deliberate pace, followed a procession of figures, which struck the heart of Lady Jean with as heavy a sense of sorrow as the crowd had just impressed with terror and surprise. First came a small company of the veterans of the city-guard, some of whom had perhaps figured in the campaigns of Middleton and Montrose, and whose bronzed, inflexible faces bore on this melancholy occasion precisely the same expression which they ordinarily exhibited on the

joyful one of attending the magistrates at the drinking of the King's health on the 29th of May.

Behind these, and encircled by some other soldiers of the same band, appeared two figures of a different sort. One of them was a young-looking, but pale and woe-worn man, the impressive wretchedness of whose appearance was strikingly increased by the ghastly dress which he wore. He was attired from head to foot in a white shroud, such as was sometimes worn in Scotland by criminals at the gallows, but which was, in the present instance, partly assumed as a badge of innocence. The excessive whiteness and emaciation of his countenance suited well with this dismal apparel, and, with the wild enthusiasm that kindled in his eyes, gave an almost supernatural effect to the whole scene, which rather resembled a pageant of the dead than a procession of earthly men. He was the only criminal : the person who walked by his side, and occasionally supported his steps, being, as the crowd whispered around, with many a varied expression of sympathy—his father. The old man had the air of a devout Presbyterian, with harsh, intelligent features, and a dress which bespoke his being a countryman of the lower rank. According to the report of the bystanders, he had educated this, his only son, for the unfortunate Church of Scotland, and now attended him to the fate which his talents and violent temperament had conspired to draw down upon his head. If ever he felt any pride in the popular admiration with which his son was honoured, no traces of such a sentiment now appeared. On the contrary, he seemed humbled to the very earth with sorrow ; and though he had perhaps contemplated the issue, now about to take place, with no small portion of satisfaction, so long as it was at a distance and uncertain, the feelings of a father had evidently proved too much for his fortitude, when the event ap-

proached in all its dreadful reality. The emotions perceptible in that rough and rigid countenance were the more striking, as being so much at variance with its natural and characteristic expression ; and the tear which gathered in his eye excited the greater commiseration, in so far as it seemed a stranger there. But the hero and heroine of our tale had little time to make observations on this piteous scene, for the procession passed quickly on, and was soon beyond their sight. When it was gone, the people of the Bow, who seemed accustomed to such sights, uttered various expressions of pity, indignation, and horror, according to their respective feelings, and then slowly retired to their dens in the stairs and booths which lined the whole of this ancient and singular street.

Lady Jean, whose beautiful eyes were suffused with tears at beholding so melancholy a spectacle, was then admonished by her attendant to proceed. With a heart deadened to all sensations of wonder and delight, she moved forward, and was soon ushered into the place called the Lawnmarket, then perhaps the most fashionable district in Edinburgh, but the grandeur and spaciousness of which she beheld almost without admiration. The scene here was, however, much gayer, and approached more nearly to her splendid preconceptions of the capital than any she had yet seen. The shops were, in her estimation, very fine, and some of the people on the street were of that noble description of which she had believed all inhabitants of cities to be. There was no crowd on the street, which, therefore, afforded room for the better display of her stately and beautiful person ; and as she walked steadily onwards, still "ushered" (for such was then the phrase) by her handsome and noble-looking attendant, a greater degree of admiration was excited amongst the gay idlers whom she passed, than even that

which marked her progress through the humbler crowd of the Grassmarket. Various noblemen, in passing towards their homes in the Castle Hill, lifted their feathered hats and bowed profoundly to the lovely vision ; and one or two magnificent dames, sweeping along with their long silk trains borne up by liverymen, stared at or eyed askance the charms which threw their own so completely into shade. By the time Lady Jean arrived at the bottom of the Lawnmarket, that is to say, where it was partially closed up by the Tolbooth, she had in a great measure recovered her spirits, and found herself prepared to enjoy the sight of the public buildings, which were so thickly clustered together at this central part of the city.

She was directed by Richard to pass along the narrow road which then led between the houses and the Tolbooth on the south, and which, being continued by a still narrower passage skirting the west end of St Giles' Church, formed the western approach to the Parliament Close. Obeying his guidance in this tortuous passage, she soon found herself at the opening, or the square space—so styled on account of its being closed on more than one side by the meeting-place of the legislative assembly of Scotland. Here a splendid scene awaited her. The whole square was filled with the members of the Scottish Parliament, Barons and Commons, who had just left the House in which they sat together,—with ladies, who on days of unusual ceremony were allowed to attend the House, and with horses richly caparisoned, and covered with gold-embroidered foot-cloths, some of which were mounted by their owners, while others were held in readiness by footmen. All was bustle and magnificence. Noblemen and gentlemen in splendid attire threaded the crowd in search of their horses ; ladies tripped after them with timid and careful steps, endeavouring, by all in their power, to avoid con-

tact with such objects as were calculated to injure their fineries ; grooms strode heavily about, and more nimble lackeys jumped everywhere, here and there, some of them as drunk as the Parliament Close claret could make them, but all intent on doing the duties of attendance and respect to their masters. Some smart and well-dressed young gentlemen were arranging their cloaks and swords, and preparing to leave the square on foot, by the passage which had given entry to Master Richard and Lady Jean.

At sight of our heroine, most of these gallants stood still in admiration, and one of them, with the trained assurance of a rake, observing her to be beautiful, a stranger, and not too well protected, accosted her in a strain of language which caused her at once to blush and tremble. Richard's brow reddened with anger as he hesitated not a moment in stepping up and telling the offender to leave the lady alone, on pain of certain consequences which might not prove agreeable.

"And who are you, my brave fellow?" said the youth, with bold assurance.

"Sirrah!" exclaimed Richard, so indignant as to forget himself, "I am that lady's husband—her servant, I mean," and here he stopped short in some confusion.

"Admirable!" exclaimed the other. "Ha! ha! ha! ha! Here, sirs, is a lady's lacquey, who does not know whether he is his mistress' servant or her husband. Let us give him up to the town-guard, to see whether the black hole will make him remember the real state of the case."

So saying, he attempted to push Richard aside, and take hold of the lady. But he had not time to touch her garments with so much as a finger, before her protector had a rapier flourishing in his eyes, and threatened him with instant death, unless he desisted from his profane purpose. At sight of

the bright steel he stepped back one or two paces, drew his own sword, and was preparing to fight, when one of his more grave associates called out—

"For shame, Rollo!—with a lady's lacquey, too, and in the presence of the duke and duchess! I see their royal highnesses, already alarmed, are inquiring the cause of the disturbance."

It was even as this gentleman said, and presently came up to the scene of contention some of the most distinguished personages in the crowd, one of whom demanded from the parties an explanation of so disgraceful an occurrence.

"Why, here is a fellow, my lord," answered Rollo, "who says he is the husband of a lady whom he attends as a liveryman, and a lady, too, the bonniest, I daresay, that has been seen in Scotland since the days of Queen Magdalen!"

"And what matters it to you," said the inquirer, who seemed to be a judge of the Session, "in what relation this man stands to his lady? Let the parties both come forward, and tell their ain tale. May it please your royal highness," he continued, addressing a very grave dignitary, who sat on horseback behind him, as stiff and formal as a sign-post, "to hear the *declarator* of thirtwa strange incomers. But see—see—what is the matter wi' Lord Wigton?" he added, pointing to an aged personage on horseback, who had just pushed forward, and seemed about to faint and fall from his horse. The person alluded to, at sight of his daughter in this unexpected place, was, in reality, confounded, and it was some time before he mastered voice enough to ejaculate—

"Oh, Jean, Jean! what is this ye've been about? or what has brocht you to Edinburgh?"

"Lord have a care of us!" exclaimed at this juncture another venerable peer, who had just come up, "what has brocht my sonsie son, Richie Livingstone, to Edinburgh, when he should have been

fechtin' the Dutch by this time in Transylvania?"

The two lovers, thus recognised by their respective parents, stood with downcast looks, and perfectly silent, while all was buzz and confusion in the brilliant circle around them; for the parties concerned were not more surprised at the aspect of their affairs, than were all the rest at the beauty of the far-famed but hitherto unseen Lady Jean Fleming. The Earl of Linlithgow, Richard's father, was the first to speak aloud, after the general astonishment had for some time subsided; and this he did in a laconic though important query, which he couched in the simple words,—

"Are ye married, bairns?"

"Yes, dearest father," said his son, gathering courage, and coming close up to his saddle-bow; and I beseech you to extricate Lady Jean and me from this crowd, and I shall tell you all when we are alone."

"A pretty man ye are, truly," said the old man, who never took anything very seriously to heart, "to be staying at hame, and getting yoursel married, all this time you should have been abroad, winning honour and wealth, as your gallant granduncle did wi' Gustavus i' the thretties! Hooever, since better mayna be, I maun try and console my Lord Wigton, who, I doot, has the worst o' the bargain, ye ne'er-do-weel!"

He then went up to Lady Jean's father, shook him by the hand, and said, that "though they had been made relations against their wills, he hoped they would continue good friends. The young people," he observed, "are no that ill-matched; and it is not the first time that the Flemings and the Livingstones have melled together, as witness the blithe marriage of the Queen's Marie to Lord Fleming in the fifteen-saxty-five. At ony rate, my lord, let us put a good face on the matter, afore thae glowerin' gentles, and whipper-snapper duchesses. I'll get horses for

the two, and they'll join the riding' down the street ; and de'il hae me, if Lady Jean doesna outshine the hale o' them ! ”

“ My Lord Linlithgow,” responded the graver and more implacable Earl of Wigton, “ it may set you to take this matter blithely, but let me tell you, its a muckle mair serious affair for me. What think ye am I to do wi’ Frances and Grizzy noo ? ”

“ Hoot toot, my lord,” said Linlithgow with a sly smile, “ their chance is as gude as ever it was, I assure you, and sae will everybody think that kens them. I *maun* ca’ horses though, or the young folk will be ridden ower afore ever they do *more* gude, by thaе rampaugin’ young men.” So saying, and taking Lord Wigton’s moody silence for assent, he proceeded to cry to his servants for the best pair of horses they could get, and these being speedily procured, Lord Richard and his bride were requested to mount ; after which they were formally introduced to the gracious notice of the Duke and Duchess of York, and the Princess Anne, who happened to attend Parliament on this the last day of its session, when it was customary for all the members to ride both to and from the House in an orderly cavalcade.

The order was given to proceed, and the lovers were soon relieved in a great measure from the embarrassing notice of the crowd, by assuming a particular place in the procession, and finding themselves confounded with more than three hundred equally splendid figures. As the pageant, however, moved down the High Street in a continuous and open line, it was impossible not to distinguish the singular loveliness of Lady Jean, and the gallant carriage of her husband, from all the rest. Accordingly, the trained bands and city guard, who lined the street, and who were in general quite as insensible to the splendours of “ the Riding ” as are the musicians in a

modern orchestra to the wonders of a melodrama in its fortieth night,—even they perceived and admired the graces of the young couple, whom they could not help gazing after with a stupid and lingering delight. From the windows, too, and the “stair-heads,” their beauty was well observed, and amply conjectured and commented on ; while many a young cavalier endeavoured, by all sorts of pretences, to find occasion to break the order of the cavalcade, and get himself haply placed nearer to the exquisite figure, of which he had got just one killing glance in the square. Slowly and majestically the brilliant train paced down the great street of Edinburgh—the acclamations of the multitude ceaselessly expressing the delight which the people of Scotland felt in this sensible type and emblem of their ancient independence.

At length they reached the courtyard of Holyrood-house, where the duke and duchess invited the whole assemblage to a ball, which they designed to give that evening in the hall of the palace ; after which all departed to their respective residences throughout the town, Lords Wigton and Linlithgow taking their young friends under their immediate protection, and seeking the residence of the former nobleman, a little way up the Canongate. In riding thither, the lovers had leisure to explain to their parents the singular circumstances of their union, and address enough to obtain unqualified forgiveness for their imprudence.

On alighting at Lord Wigton’s house, Lady Jean found her sisters confined to their rooms with headache, or some such serious indisposition, and in the utmost dejection on account of having been thereby withheld from the Riding of the Parliament. Their spirits, as may be supposed, were not much elevated, when, on coming forth in dishabille to welcome their sister, they learned that she had had the good fortune to be

married before them. Their ill-luck was, however, irremediable, and so, making a merit of submitting to it, they condescended to be rather agreeable during the dinner and the afternoon. It was not long before all parties were perfectly reconciled to what had taken place; and by the time it was necessary to dress for the ball, the elder young ladies declared themselves so much recovered as to be able to accompany their happy sister.

The Earl of Linlithgow and his son then sent a servant for proper dresses, and prepared themselves for the occasion without leaving the house. When all were ready, a number of chairs were called to transport their dainty persons down the street. The news of Lady Jean's arrival, and of her marriage, having now spread abroad, the court in front of the house, the alley, and even the open street, were crowded with people of all ranks, anxious to catch a passing glimpse of the heroine of so strange a tale. As her chair was carried along, a buzz of admiration from all who were so happy as to be near it, marked its progress. Happy, too, was the gentleman who had the good luck to be near her chair as it was set down at the palace-gate, and assist her in stepping from it upon the

lighted pavement. From the outer gate, along the piazza of the inner court, and all the way up the broad staircase to the illuminated hall, two rows of noblemen and gentlemen formed a brilliant avenue, as she passed along, while a hundred plumed caps were doffed in honour of so much beauty, and as many youthful eyes glanced bright with satisfaction at beholding it. The object of all this attention tripped modestly along in the hand of the Earl of Linlithgow, acknowledging, with many a graceful flexure and undulation of person, the compliments of the spectators.

At length the company entered the spacious and splendid room in which the ball was to be held. At the extremity, opposite to the entry, upon an elevated platform, sat the three royal personages, all of whom, on Lady Jean's introduction, rose and came forward to welcome her and her husband to the entertainments of Holyrood, and to hope that her ladyship would often adorn their circle. In a short time the dancing commenced; and, amidst all the ladies who exhibited their charms and their magnificent attire in that captivating exercise, who was, either in person or dress, half so brilliant as Lady Jean?—*Chambers's Edin. Journal.*

THE MONKEY:

*A SECOND PASSAGE IN THE LIFE OF WILLIAM M'GEE, WEAVER
IN HAMILTON.*

BY ROBERT MACNISH, LL.D.

I DINNA think that in a' nature there's a mair curiouser cratur than a monkey. I mak this observe frae being witness to an extraordinar' event that took place in Hamilton, three or four days after my never-to-be-forgotten

Battle of the Brecks.* Some even gaed the length to say that it was to the full mair curiouser than that affair, in sae far as the principal performer in the ae case was a rational man, whereas

* See *ante*, p. 223.

in the ither he was only a bit ape. But folk may talk as they like about monkeys, and cry them down for being stupid and mischievous, I for aye will no gang that length. Whatever they may be on the score of mischief, there can be nae doubt, that, sae far as gumption is concerned, they are just uncommon ; and for wit and fun they would beat ony man black and blue. In fact, I dinna think that monkeys are beasts ava. I hae a half notion that they are just wee hairy men, that canna or rather winna speak, in case they may be made to work like ither folk, instead of leading a life of idleness.

But to the point. I ance had a monkey, ane of the drollest looking deevils ye ever saw. He was gayan big for a monkey, and was hairy a' ower, except his face and his bit hurdies, which had a degree of bareness about them, and were nearly as saft as a lady's loof. Weel, what think ye that I did wi' the beastie ? 'Od, man, I dressed him up like a Heelandman, and put a kilt upon him, and a lang-tailed red coat, and a blue bannet, which for security's sake I tied, woman-like, below his chin, wi' twa bits of yellow ribbon. I not only did this, but I learnt him to walk upon his twa hinder legs, and to carry a stick in his right hand when he gaed out, the better to support him in his peregrinations. He was for a' the world like a wee man in kilts—sae much sae, that when Glengarry, the great Heeland chieftain, wha happened to be at Hamilton on a visit to the Duke, saw him by chance, he swore by the powers that he was like ane o' the Celtic Society, and that if I likit he would endeavour to get him admitted a member of that body. I thocht at the time that Glengarry was jokin', but I hae since had gude reason for thinking that he was in real earnest, as Andrew Brand says that he and the Celts hae been like to cut ane anither's throats, and that he might mean this as

an affront upon them. Hoosomever I maun do Glengarry the justice to say, that had he got my Nosey (that was his name) made a member, he wadna hae prued the least witty or courageous o' the society, and would hae dune nae disgrace to the chief's recommendation.

But I am fleeing awa like a shuttle frae the subject on hand. Weel, it turned out in this manner, as ye shall hear. Ae afternoon towards the gloamin', I was obligated to tak a stap down to the cross wi' a web under my arm, which I had finished for Mr Weft, the muslin manufacturer. By way of frolic —a gayan foolish ane I allow—I brocht Nosey alang wi' me. He had on, as for ordinar, his Heeland dress, and walkit behind me, wi' the bit stick in his hand and his tail sticking out frae below his kilt, as if he had been my flunkey. It was, after a', a queer sicht, and, as may be supposed, I drew a hale crowd o' bairns after me, bawling out, "Here's Willie M'Gee's monkey," and giein' him nits and gingerbread, and makin' as muckle o' the cratur as could be ; for Nosey was a great favourite in the town, and everybody likit him for his droll tricks, and the way he used to gирн, and dance, and tumble ower his head, to amuse them.

On entering Mr Weft's shop, I faund it empty ; there wasna leiving soul within. I supposed he had gane out for a licht ; and being gayan familiar wi' him, I took a stap ben to the back shop, leaving Nosey in the fore ane. I sat for twa or three minutes, but naebody made his appearance. At last the front door, which I had ta'en care to shut after me, opened, and I look't to see what it could be, thinking that, nae doubt, it was Mr Weft, or his apprentice. It was neither the ane nor the ither, but a strong middle-aged, red-faced Heelandman, wi' specks on, and wi' a kilt and a bannet, by a' the world like my monkey's. Now, what think ye Nosey was about a' this time ? He was

sittin' behind the counter upon the lang three-leggit stool that stood forenenent Mr West's desk, and was turning ower the leaves of his ledger wi' a look which, for auld-fashioned sagaciousness, was wonderfu' to behold. I was sae tickled at the sight that I paid nae sort of attention to the Heelandman, but continued looking frae the backshop at Nosey, lauching a' the time in my sleeve—for I jaloused that some queer scene would tak place between the twa. And I wasna far wrang, for the stranger, takin' out a pound frae his spleuchan, handed it ower to the monkey, and speered at him, in his droll norland deealect, if he could change a note. When I heard this, I thought I would hae lauched outright ; and naething but sheer curiosity to see how the thing would end made me keep my gravity. It was plain that Donald had ta'en Nosey for ane of his ain countrymen—and the thing after a' wasna greatly to be wondered at, and that for three reasons.

Firstly, the shop was rather darkish.

Secondly, the Heelandman had on specks, as I hae just said ; and it was likely on this account that he was rather short-sighted ; and

Thirdly, Nosey, wi' his kilt, and bannet, and red coat, was to a' intents and purposes as like a human creature as a monkey could weel be.

Nae sooner, then, had he got the note than he opened it out, and lookit at it wi' his wee, glowrin', restless een, as if to see that it wasna a forgery. He then shook his head like a doctor when he's no very sure what's wrang wi' a person, but wants to mak it appear that he kens a' about it—and continued in this style till the Heelandman's patience began to get exhausted.

"Can ye no shange the note, old shentleman?" quo' Donald. Nosey gied his head anither shake, and lookit uncommon wise.

"Is the note no goot, sir?" spake (5)

the Heelandman, a second time ; but the cratur, instead of answering him, only gied anither of his wise shakes, as much as to say, "I'm no very sure about it." At this Donald lost his temper. "If the note doesna please ye, sir," quo' he, "I'll thank ye to gie me it back again, and I'll gang to some ither place." And he stretchit out his hand to tak haud o't, when my frien' wi' the tail, lifting up his stick, lent him sic a whack ower the fingers as made him pu' back in the twinkling of an ee. "Cot tamm ye, ye auld scoundrel," said the man ; "de ye mean to tak my money frae me?" And he lifted up a rung big eneugh to fell a stot, and let flee at the monkey ; but Nosey was ower quick for him, and, jumping aside, he lichted on a shelf before ane could say Jock Robinson. Here he rowed up the note like a ba' in his hand, and put it into his coat pouch like ony rational cratur. Not only this, but he mockit the Heelandman by a' manner of means, shooting out his tongue at him, spitting at him, and girning at him wi' his queer outlandish physiognomy. Then he would tak haud o' his tail in his twa hands, and wag it at Donald, and steekking his nieves, he would seem to threaten him with a leatherin'! A'thegither he was desperate impudent, and eneugh to try the patience of a saunt, no to speak o' a het-bluided Heelandman. It was gude for sair een to see how Donald behavit on this occasion. He raged like ane demented, misca'ing the monkey beyond measure, and swearing as mony Gaelic aiths as micht hae saired an ordinar man for a twalmonth. During this time, I never steered a foot, but keepit keekin' frae the back shop upon a' that was ganging on. I was highly delighted ; and jalousing that Nosey was ower supple to be easily catched, I had nae apprehension for the event, and remained snug in my berth to see the upshot.

In a short time, in comes Mr West,

wi' a piece of lowing paper in his hand, that he had got from the next door to licht the shop ; and nae sooner did Donald see him than he axed him for his note.

"What note, honest man?" said Mr Weft.

"Cot tamn," quo' Donald ; "the note the auld scoundrel, your grandfather, stole frae me."

"My grandfather!" answered the ither wi' amazement. "I am thinking, honest man, ye hae had a glass ower muckle. My grandfather has been dead for sixteen years, and I ne'er heard tell till now that he was a fief."

"Weel, weel, then, quo' the Heelandman, "I don't care naething about it. If he's no your grandfather, he'll be your faither, or your brither, or your cousin."

"My faither or my brither, or my cousin!" repeated Mr Weft. "I maun tell ye plainly, frien', that I hae neither faither, nor brither, nor cousin of ony description, on this side of the grave. I dinna understand ye, honest man, but I reckon that ye hae sat ower lang at the whisky, and my advice to ye is to stap awa hame and sleep it aff."

At this speech the Heelandman lost a' patience, and lookit sae awfully fairce, that ance or twice I was on the nick of coming forrit, and explaining how matters really stood ; but curiosity keepit me chained to the back shop, and I just thought I would bide a wee, and see how the affair was like to end.

"Pray, wha are you, sir?" said Donald, putting his hands in his sides, and looking through his specks upon Mr Weft, like a deevil incarnit. "Wha are you, sir, that daur to speak to me in this manner?"

"Wha am I?" said the ither, drapping the remnant of the paper, which was burnin' close to his fingers, "I am Saunders Weft, manufacturer in Hamilton—that's what I am."

"And I am Tonald Campbell, piper's sister's son to his grace the great, grand Tuke of Argyll," thundered out the Heelandman, wi' a voice that was fearsome to hear.

"And what about that?" quo' Mr Weft, rather snappishly, as I thocht. "If ye were the great, grand Duke of Argyll himsel, as ye ca' him, I'll no permit you to kick up a dust in my shop."

"Ye scounrel," said Donald, seizing Mr Weft by the throat, and shaking him till he tottered like an aspen leaf, "div ye mean to speak ill of his grace the Tuke of Argyll?" And he gied him anither shake—then, laying haud of his nose, he swore that he would pu't as lang as a cow's tail, if he didna that instant restore him his lost property. At this sicht I began to grue a' ower, and now saw the needcessity of stapping ben, and saving my employer frae farther damage, bodily and itherwise. Nae sooner had I made my appearance than Donald let go his grip of Mr Weft's nose, and the latter, in a great passion, cried out—

"William M'Gee, I tak ye to witness what I hae sufferit frae this bluidthirsty Heelandman ! It's no to be endured in a Christian country. I'll hae the law of him, that I will. I'll be whuppit but I'll hae amends, although it costs me twenty pounds !"

"What's the matter?" quo' I, pretending ignorance of the hale concern. "What, in the name of Nebuchadnezzar, has set ye thegither by the lugs ?"

Then Mr Weft began his tale, how he had been collared and weel nigh thrappled in his ain shop ;—then the ither tauld how, in the first place, Mr Weft's grandfather, as he ca'd Nosey, had stolen his note, and how, in the second place, Mr Weft himself had insulted the great, grand Duke of Argyll. In a word, there was a desperate kick-up between them, the ane threeping

that he would tak the law of the ither immediately. Na, in this respect Donald gaed the greatest length, for he swore that, rather than be defeated, he wad carry his cause to the House of Lords, although it cost him thretty pounds sterling. I now saw it was time to put in a word.

"Hout-tout, gentlemen," quo' I, "what's the use of a' this clishmaclaver? Ye've baith gotten the wrang sow by the lug, or my name's no William M'Gee. I'll wager ye a penny-piece, that my monkey Nosey is at the bottom of the business."

Nae sooner had I spoken the word, than the twa, looking round the shop, spied the beastie sitting upon the shelf, girming at them, and putting out his tongue, and wiggle-wagglng his walking stick ower his left elbow, as if he had been playing upon the fiddle. Mr Weft at this apparition set up a loud laugh; his passion left him in a moment, when he saw the ridiculous mistake that the Heelandman had fa'en into, and I thocht he would hae bursted his sides wi' evendown merriment. At first, Donald lookit desperate angry, and, judging frae the way he was twisting about his mouth and rowing his een, I opined that he intended some deadly skaith to the monkey. But his gude sense, of which Heelandmen are no a'-thegither destitute, got the better of his anger, and he roared and lauched like the very mischief. Nor was this a', for nae sooner had he began to lauch, than the monkey did the same thing, and held its sides in preceesely the same manner,

imitating his actions, in the maist amusin' way imaginable. This only set Donald a-lauching mair than ever, and when he lifted up his sieve, and shook it at Nosey in a gude-humoured way, what think ye that the cratur did? 'Od, man, he took the note frae his pouch, whaur it lay rowed up like a ba', and papping it at Donald, hit him as fairly upon the nose as if it had been shot out of a weel-aimed musket. There was nae resisting this. The haill three, or rather the haill four, for Nosey joined us, set up a loud lauch; and the Heelandman's was the loudest of a', showing that he was really a man of sense, and could tak a joke as weel as his neighbours.

When the lauchin' had a wee subsided, Mr Campbell, in order to show that he had nae ill will to Mr Weft, axed his pardon for the rough way he had treated him, but the worthy manufacturer wadna hear o't. "Houts, man," quo' he, "dinna say a word about it. It's a mistak a'thegither, and Solomon himsel, ye ken, whiles gaed wrang." Whereupon the Heelandman bought a Kilmarnock nicht-cap, price elevenpence ha'penny, frae Mr Weft, and paid him wi' part of the very note that brocht on the ferlie I hae just been relating. But his gude wull didna end here, for he insisted on takin' us a'—Nosey amang the lave—to the nearest public, where he gied us a frien'y glass, and we keepit talking about monkeys, and what not, in a manner at ance edifying and amusing to hear.

THE LADDER DANCER.

Men should know why
 They write, and for what end ; but note or text,
 I never know the word which will come next ;
 So on I ramble, now and then narrating,
 Now pondering.—*Byron.*

IT was a lovely evening in summer, when a crowd hallooing and shouting in the street of L—, a village of the north of Scotland, at once disturbed my reveries, and left me little leisure again to yield myself to their wayward dominion. In sooth, I had no pretence for indifference to a very singular spectacle of a something-like human being moving in mid-air ; and although its saltatory gambols in this unusual situation could scarcely be called dancing, it was certainly intended to be like it, however little the resemblance might be approved. A something between a male and female in point of dress—a perfect hermaphrodite in regard to costume—had mounted herself on gigantic stilts, on which she hopped about, defying the secrecy even of the middle floors of the surrounding houses, and in some cases giving her a peep into the attic regions of less lofty domiciles. In this manner, stalking about from side to side, like a crane among the reeds, the very Diable Boiteux himself was never more inquisitive after the domestic concerns of his neighbours, or better fitted to explore them by his invisibility, than she was by her altitude. Her presence in mid-air, in more than one instance, was the subject of alarm to the sober inmates of the street, who, little suspicious of such intrusion, might perhaps be engaged in household cares which did not court observation, or had sunk into the relaxations of an undress, after the fatigues and heat of the day. Everywhere the windows might be heard thrown up with impatient haste,—the sash skirling and creaking in its ascent

with the violence of the effort, and immediately after, a head might be seen poked forward to explore the “whence” and “wherefore,”—in short, to ask in one word, if it could be so condensed, the meaning and purpose of this aerial visitor.

The more desultory occupations of a little village hold but loosely together the different classes of it. Master and servant approach more nearly,—the one is less elevated, and the other less depressed, than in great towns,—a show is at least as great a treat to the one as to the other, and there is nothing in their respective notions of decorum to repress their joyous feelings, while under the irresistible impulse of the inimitable Mr Punch, or of the demure and clumsy bear, treading a measure with the graces of a *Mercandotti*. In short, the more simple elements of a villager’s mind are, like their own more robust frames, more easily inflamed ;—there is more excitable stuff about them, because they are less frequently subjected to the tear and wear of novelty, which towns constantly afford. The schoolmaster and the schoolboy alike pour out from the lowly straw-roofed “academy,” with the same eager and breathless haste, to catch a first glance, or secure a favourable post. Syntax and arithmetic—blessed oblivion !—are for the moment forgotten. Think of the ecstacies of the little culprit, who was perhaps under the rod, if at that awful moment a troop of dancing dogs, with their full accompaniment of pipe and tabor, came under the school window, and was at once gladdened with a respite and a show. One moment watching the grim

smile of the pedagogue ; next lost in wonder at the accomplished puppets—nothing to disturb his bliss but the trammels of Concordance, or the intricacies of the Rule of Three.

But if mere novelty has such delights for the younger portion, to escape from the monotony of village life has not less charms for the graver class of its inhabitants. An old gentleman, evidently unmindful of his dishabille, popped his head forth of his casement, heedless of the red Kilmarnock in which it was bedight, and gazed with eager curiosity on the ambitious female who had now passed his lattice. He seemed to have caught a hint of the *dereglement* of his own costume, by remarking that of his female neighbour at the adjoining window, who exposed courageously the snowy ringlets which begirt the region of bumps and qualities, in place of the brown and glossy curls, which, till that ill-fated moment, were supposed to have belonged to it.* He withdrew

* I love to luxuriate in a note ; it is like hunting in an unenclosed country. One word about the affectations of Graybeards. Among all the ten thousand reasons for their gray hairs, no one ever thought of years as being at least a probable cause. It is one of the very few hereditary peculiarities of physical constitution, which are loudly proclaimed and gladly seized, to apologise for the sin of hoary locks. Acute sorrow, or sudden surprise ;—indigestion—that talismanic thing, the nerves—love, speculation—or anything, in short, are all approved theories to explain their first intrusion among the legitimate ringlets of male and female persons of "no particular age." Even it is said that people have awoke gray who lay down under very different colours ; of course, they had had a bad dream, or lain on the wrong side, but no conscientious perruquier could have sworn to their identity under such a metamorphosis. In short, gray hairs are purely accidental ; they have nothing to do with years ; and being deemed a misfortune, have from time immemorial been always spoken of with reverence, but nowhere that I can recollect are they spoken of with affection, save in the beautiful song, "John Anderson, my Jo," where the kind-hearted wife invokes blessings on the frosty pow of her aged partner.

from sight with some precipitation, but whether in horror of his own recklessness, or in deference to the heedlessness of his neighbour, must for ever remain in doubt. Is it then strange if there was quite a revel-rout in the streets of the little village, when old and young alike responded to the wonder of the scene ? To whatever quarter she passed, not a window was down ; labour was suspended to witness feats which no labour of theirs could accomplish. Women, bearing with them the marks of the household toils in which they had been last engaged, stood at their doors, some with sarcastic, but all with curious gaze ; while the sunburnt Pied-montoise at times danced on her stilts a kind of mock waltz, or hobbled from side to side, in ridicule, as it would seem, of the livelier measure and footing of the quadrille. When, mounted on the highest point of her stilts, she strided across the way, to collect or to solicit pence, the little urchins hanging about their mothers, clung more closely to them as she approached, and looked up to her, doubting and fearful, as fish are said to be scared by a passing cloud. She was most successful among the male spectators of the village. Her feats with them excited no feelings of rivalry, and their notions of decorum were not so easily disturbed as those of their helpmates, who, in refusing their contribution, never withhold their reprobation of such anti - Christian gambols.

" Gae awa wi' you, ye idle randie ! Weel sets the like o' sic misleard queans to gang about the country playing antics like a fule, to fules like yoursel," was the answer given by a middle-aged woman, who stood near me, to the boy who carried round a wooden platter for the halfpence, and who instantly retired, to save herself from the latter part of her own reproach, dragging with her a ragged little rogue, who begged hard to remain till the end

of the exhibition. By this time the procession had reached the end of the street, where some of the better class of the inhabitants resided, and some preparations were made for a more elaborate spectacle. The swarthy Savoyard, who accompanied the ladder-dancer, after surveying the field, seemed to fix his station opposite to a respectable-looking house, whose liberality he evidently measured by its outward pretensions.

There is no state of helplessness equal to that of ignorance of the language in which a favour is to be craved, and you may estimate the proficiency of the foreigner in the intricacies of our own dialect by the obsequiousness of his smile, which he at once adapts to the purposes of solicitation, and of defence against insult and ridicule. While with a look of preparation he hustled about, to gain attention, he grinned and nodded to the windows which were occupied, while he held a ladder upright, and placing his hat at the bottom of it to receive the niggard bounty of the spectators, he stood at the back of it, supporting it with both his hands. The lady of the stilts now advanced, and resting on one of them, with considerable address lifted up the other and pushed it forward, with an action that seemed to denote something like a salutation, or obeisance,—a kind of aerial salaam. At this moment the hall-door was opened, and a portly-looking woman of middle-age, evidently the mistress of the household, came forward and planted herself on the broad landing-place of the stair. There was about this personage the round, full look which betokens ease and affluence; and the firm, steady step which argues satisfaction with our condition. She fixed herself on the doorstep with the solid perpendicularity of Pompey's Pillar, and now and then turned round to some young girls who attended her, as if to chide them for mixing her up with so silly an exhibition.

I had supposed that the Piedmontoise would have laid aside her stilts when she ascended the ladder, but far from it, for in this consisted the singularity of the exhibition. She climbed the ladder, still mounted on them, then descended like a cat on the other side of it; she hopped down as she had hopped up, with equal steadiness and agility, and thought to crown her efforts by a notable feat, which was no less than standing on her head on the top of the ladder, and brandishing the two stilts, from which she had disengaged herself, round about her, like the arms of a windmill. It required no great skill to see that the old lady was very much offended with this last performance, for when the little dish was carried to her, and the ladder-dancer directed a beseeching look accompanied by an attitude which seemed to imply that there were other feats yet in reserve, if encouragement was held out, the patroness of the stair-head could restrain herself no longer, but poured out a torrent partaking both of objurgation and admonition.

"Ne'er-do-weel hussie," and "vagrant gipsy," were some of the sharp missiles shot at the unsuspecting figurante, who, as little aware of the meaning of all this "sharp-toothed violence," as the bird is of the mischief aimed at him by the fowler, sadly misapprehended its import, and thinking it conveyed encouragement and approbation, ducked her head in acknowledgment, while the thunder of the old lady's reprobation rolled about her in the most ceaseless rapidity of vituperation.

"Ye're a pretty ane indeed, to play sic antics afore ony body's house! Hae ye naebody to learn ye better manners that to rin up and down a ladder like a squirrel, twisting and turning yoursel till my banes are sair to look at you? Muckle fitter gin ye would read your Bible, if as much grace be left to ye; or maybe a religious tract, to begin wi'; for I doubt ye wad need preparation

afore ye could drink at the spring-head wi' ony special profit."

The last part was conveyed with a kind of smile of self-approbation ; for of all tasks, to reclaim a sinner is the most pleasing and soothing to religious vanity ;—so comfortable it is to be allowed to scold on any terms, but doubly delightful, because it always implies superiority. But the ladder-dancer and her attendant were aware of no part of what was passing in the mind of the female lecturer, and fully as ignorant of the eloquent address I have just repeated ; she only saw, in the gracious looks in which her feats were condemned, an approval of her labours, for it passed her philosophy to comprehend the ungodly qualities of standing on the head, or whirling like a top. Again the ladder-dancer cringed and bowed to her of the stair-head ; and her male supporter, who acted as a kind of pedestal to her elevation, bowed and grinned a little more grimly, while the boy held out his plate to receive the results of all this assiduity. But they could not command a single word of broad English among them. Theirs only was the eloquence of nods and grimaces ; a monkey could have done as much, and in the present humour of the old lady, would have been as much approved. The ladder-dancer grew impatient, and seemed determined on an effort to close her labours.

"Ah, Madame ! " she exclaimed ; "Madame" was repeated by the man, and "Madame" was re-echoed by the boy.

"Nane o' your nonsense wi' me," was the response from the stair-head ; "your madam'ing, and I dinna ken what mair havers. Ye needna fash your head to stand there a' day girning at me, and making sic outlandish sport. I'm mair fule than you, that bides to look at you ; a fine tale they'd hae to tell that could say they saw me here, idling my precious time on the like o' you."

She now whispered to one of the girls, who retired, and soon after returned, giving her a small parcel, which she examined, and seemed to say all was right. She beckoned the ladder-dancer, who slid down with cat-like agility, and was instantly with her, standing a step lower, in deference to the doughty dame.

"Here," said she, with a gruff air, which was rather affected than real, "tak these precious gifts," handing her a bunch of religious tracts. "See if ye canna find out your spiritual wants, and learn to seek for the 'Pearl of Price.' My certie, but ye're a weel-faured hussie," examining her more narrowly, "but your gaits are no that commendable ; but for a' that, a mair broken ship has reached the land."

I could observe that she slipped a half-crown into the hand of the Pied-montoise ; and as she turned away to avoid thanks, an elderly gentleman (perhaps her husband), who stood by, said in a low voice,—

"That's like yoursel, Darsie ; your bark was aye waur than your bite, ony day!"—*Blackwood's Magazine*, 1826.

THE ELDER'S DEATH-BED.

BY PROFESSOR WILSON.

IT was on a fierce and howling day that I was crossing the dreary moor of Auchindown, on my way to the manse of that parish—a solitary pedestrian. The snow, which had been incessantly falling for a week past, was drifted into beautiful but dangerous wreaths, far and wide, over the melancholy expanse ; and the scene kept visibly shifting before me, as the strong wind that blew from every point of the compass struck the dazzling masses, and heaved them up and down in endless transformation. There was something inspiriting in the labour with which, in the buoyant strength of youth, I forced my way through the storm ; and I could not but enjoy those gleamings of sunlight that ever and anon burst through some unexpected opening in the sky, and gave a character of cheerfulness, and even warmth, to the sides or summits of the stricken hills. Sometimes the wind stopped of a sudden, and then the air was as silent as the snow—not a murmur to be heard from spring or stream, now all frozen up over those high moorlands. As the momentary cessations of the sharp drift allowed my eyes to look onwards and around, I saw here and there, up the little opening valleys, cottages just visible beneath the black stems of their snow-covered clumps of trees, or beside some small spot of green pasture kept open for the sheep. These intimations of life and happiness came delightfully to me in the midst of the desolation ; and the barking of a dog, attending some shepherd in his quest on the hill, put fresh vigour into my limbs, telling me that, lonely as I seemed to be, I was surrounded by cheerful, though unseen company, and that I was not the only wanderer over the snows.

As I walked along, my mind was

insensibly filled with a crowd of pleasant images of rural winter life, that helped me gladly onwards over many miles of moor. I thought of the severe but cheerful labours of the barn—the mending of farm-gear by the fireside—the wheel turned by the foot of old age less for gain than as a thrifty pastime—the skilful mother making “*auld claes look amait as weel's the new*”—the ballad unconsciously listened to by the family all busy at their own tasks round the singing maiden—the old traditional tale, told by some wayfarer hospitably housed till the storm should blow by—the unexpected visit of neighbours on need or friendship—or the footstep of lover undeterred by snow-drifts that have buried up his flocks ;—but above all, I thought of those hours of religious worship that have not yet escaped from the domestic life of the peasantry of Scotland—of the sound of psalms that the depth of the snow cannot deaden to the ear of Him to whom they are chanted—and of that sublime Sabbath-keeping which, on days too tempestuous for the kirk, changes the cottage of the shepherd into the temple of God.

With such glad and peaceful images in my heart, I travelled along that dreary moor, with the cutting wind in my face, and my feet sinking in the snow, or sliding on the hard blue ice beneath it—as cheerfully as I ever walked in the dewy warmth of a summer morning, through fields of fragrance and of flowers. And now I could discern, within half an hour's walk, before me, the spire of the church, close to which stood the manse of my aged friend and benefactor. My heart burned within me as a sudden gleam of stormy sunlight tipped it with fire ; and I felt, at that moment, an inexpressible sense

of the sublimity of the character of that grayheaded shepherd who had, for fifty years, abode in the wilderness, keeping together his own happy little flock.

As I was ascending a knoll, I saw before me on horseback an old man, with his long white hairs beaten against his face, who, nevertheless, advanced with a calm countenance against the hurricane. It was no other than my father, of whom I had been thinking—for my father had I called him for many years, and for many years my father had he truly been. My surprise at meeting him on such a moor—on such a day—was but momentary, for I knew that he was a shepherd who cared not for the winter's wrath. As he stopped to take my hand kindly into his, and to give his blessing to his long-expected visitor, the wind fell calm—the whole face of the sky was softened, and brightness, like a smile, went over the blushing and crimson snow. The very elements seemed then to respect the hoary head of fourscore ; and after our first greeting was over, when I looked around, in my affection, I felt how beautiful was winter.

"I am going," said he, "to visit a man at the point of death; a man whom you cannot have forgotten; whose head will be missed in the kirk next Sabbath by all my congregation; a devout man, who feared God all his days, and whom, on this awful trial, God will assuredly remember. I am going, my son, to the Hazel Glen."

I knew well in childhood that lonely farmhouse, so far off among the beautiful wild green hills, and it was not likely that I had forgotten the name of its possessor. For six years' Sabbaths I had seen the Elder in his accustomed place beneath the pulpit, and, with a sort of solemn fear, had looked on his steadfast countenance during sermon, psalm, and prayer. On returning to the scenes of my infancy, I now met the pastor going to pray by his death-

bed ; and, with the privilege which nature gives us to behold, even in their last extremity, the loving and the beloved, I turned to accompany him to the house of sorrow, resignation, and death.

And now, for the first time, I observed walking close to the feet of his horse, a little boy of about ten years of age, who kept frequently looking up in the pastor's face, with his blue eyes bathed in tears. A changeful expression of grief, hope, and despair, made almost pale cheeks that otherwise were blooming in health and beauty; and I recognised, in the small features and smooth forehead of childhood, a resemblance to the aged man whom we understood was now lying on his death-bed. "They had to send his grandson for me through the snow, mere child as he is," said the minister to me, looking tenderly on the boy; "but love makes the young heart bold—and there is One who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb."

I again looked on the fearless child with his rosy cheeks, blue eyes, and yellow hair, so unlike grief or sorrow, yet now sobbing aloud as if his heart would break. "I do not fear but that my grandfather will yet recover, as soon as the minister has said one single prayer by his bedside. I had no hope, or little, as I was running by myself to the manse over hill after hill, but I am full of hopes, now that we are together; and oh ! if God suffers my grandfather to recover, I will lie awake all the long winter nights blessing Him for His mercy. I will rise up in the middle of the darkness, and pray to Him in the cold on my naked knees !" and here his voice was choked, while he kept his eyes fixed, as if for consolation and encouragement, on the solemn and pitying countenance of the kind-hearted pious old man.

We soon left the main road, and struck off through scenery that, covered as it was with the bewildering snow, I

sometimes dimly and sometimes vividly remembered ; our little guide keeping ever a short distance before us, and with a sagacity like that of instinct, showing us our course, of which no trace was visible, save occasionally his own little footprints as he had been hurrying to the manse.

After crossing, for several miles, morass and frozen rivulet, and drifted hollow, with here and there the top of a stone-wall peeping through the snow, or the more visible circle of a sheep-bucht, we descended into the Hazel-glen, and saw before us the solitary house of the dying Elder.

A gleam of days gone by came suddenly over my soul. The last time that I had been in this glen was on a day of June, fifteen years before,—a holiday, the birthday of the king. A troop of laughing schoolboys, headed by our benign pastor, we danced over the sunny braes, and startled the linnets from their nests among the yellow broom. Austere as seemed to us the Elder's Sabbath face when sitting in the kirk, we schoolboys knew that it had its week-day smiles, and we flew on the wings of joy to our annual festival of curds and cream in the farm-house of that little sylvan world. We rejoiced in the flowers and the leaves of that long, that interminable summer day ; its memory was with our boyish hearts from June to June ; and the sound of that sweet name, "Hazel Glen," often came upon us at our tasks, and brought too brightly into the school-room the pastoral imagery of that mirthful solitude.

As we now slowly approached the cottage through a deep snow-drift, which the distress within had prevented the household from removing, we saw peeping out from the door, brothers and sisters of our little guide, who quickly disappeared, and then their mother showed herself in their stead, expressing by her raised eyes, and arms

folded across her breast, how thankful she was to see at last the pastor, beloved in joy and trusted in trouble.

Soon as the venerable old man dismounted from his horse, our active little guide led it away into the humble stable, and we entered the cottage. Not a sound was heard but the ticking of the clock. The matron, who had silently welcomed us at the door, led us, with suppressed sighs and a face stained with weeping, into her father's sick room, which even in that time of sore distress was as orderly as if health had blessed the house. I could not help remarking some old china ornaments on the chimneypiece, and in the window was an ever-blown rose-tree, that almost touched the lowly roof, and brightened that end of the apartment with its blossoms. There was something tasteful in the simple furniture ; and it seemed as if grief could not deprive the hand of that matron of its careful elegance. Sickness, almost hopeless sickness, lay there, surrounded with the same cheerful and beautiful objects which health had loved ; and she, who had arranged and adorned the apartment in her happiness, still kept it from disorder and decay in her sorrow.

With a gentle hand she drew the curtain of the bed, and there, supported by pillows as white as the snow that lay without, reposed the dying Elder. It was plain that the hand of God was upon him, and that his days on the earth were numbered.

He greeted his minister with a faint smile, and a slight inclination of the head—for his daughter had so raised him on the pillows, that he was almost sitting up in his bed. It was easy to see that he knew himself to be dying, and that his soul was prepared for the great change ; yet, along with the solemn resignation of a Christian who had made his peace with God and his Saviour, there was blended on his white and sunken countenance an expression

of habitual reverence for the minister of his faith ; and I saw that he could not have died in peace without that comforter to pray by his death-bed.

A few words sufficed to tell who was the stranger ;—and the dying man, blessing me by name, held out to me his cold shrivelled hand, in token of recognition. I took my seat at a small distance from the bedside, and left a closer station for those who were more dear. The pastor sat down near his head ; and, by the bed, leaning on it with gentle hands, stood that matron, his daughter-in-law—a figure that would have graced and sainted a higher dwelling, and whose native beauty was now more touching in its grief. But religion upheld her whom nature was bowing down. Not now for the first time were the lessons taught by her father to be put into practice, for I saw that she was clothed in deep mourning and she behaved like the daughter of a man whose life had been not only irreproachable but lofty, with fear and hope fighting desperately but silently in the core of her pure and pious heart.

While we thus remained in silence, the beautiful boy, who, at the risk of his life, had brought the minister of religion to the bedside of his beloved grandfather, softly and cautiously opened the door, and with the hoar-frost yet unmelted on his bright glistening ringlets, walked up to the pillow, evidently no stranger there. He no longer sobbed—he no longer wept—for hope had risen strongly within his innocent heart, from the consciousness of love so fearlessly exerted, and from the presence of the holy man in whose prayers he trusted, as in the intercession of some superior and heavenly nature. There he stood, still as an image in his grandfather's eyes, that, in their dimness, fell upon him with delight. Yet, happy as was the trusting child, his heart was devoured by fear, and he looked as if one word might stir up the flood of tears

that had subsided in his heart. As he crossed the dreary and dismal moors, he had thought of a corpse, a shroud, and a grave ; he had been in terror, lest death should strike in his absence the old man, with whose gray hairs he had so often played ; but now he *saw* him alive, and felt that death was not able to tear him away from the clasps, and links, and fetters of his grandchild's embracing love.

"If the storm do not abate," said the sick man, after a pause, "it will be hard for my friends to carry me over the drifts to the kirkyard." This sudden approach to the grave struck, as with a bar of ice, the heart of the loving boy ; and, with a long deep sigh, he fell down with his face like ashes on the bed, while the old man's palsied right hand had just strength to lay itself upon his head. "Blessed be thou, my little Jamie, even for His own name's sake who died for us on the tree !" The mother, without terror, but with an averted face, lifted up her loving-hearted boy, now in a dead fainting-fit, and carried him into an adjoining room, where he soon revived. But that child and the old man were not to be separated. In vain he was asked to go to his brothers and sisters ;—pale, breathless, and shivering, he took his place as before, with eyes fixed on his grandfather's face, but neither weeping nor uttering a word. Terror had frozen up the blood of his heart ; but his were now the only dry eyes in the room ; and the pastor himself wept—albeit the grief of fourscore is seldom vented in tears.

"God has been gracious to me, a sinner," said the dying man. "During thirty years that I have been an elder in your kirk, never have I missed sitting there one Sabbath. When the mother of my children was taken from me—it was on a Tuesday she died, and on Saturday she was buried—we stood together when my Alice was let down

into the narrow house made for all living ; on the Sabbath I joined in the public worship of God : she commanded me to do so the night before she went away. I could not join in the psalm that Sabbath, for her voice was not in the throng. Her grave was covered up, and grass and flowers grew there ; so was my heart ; but thou, whom, through the blood of Christ, I hope to see this night in Paradise, knowest that, from that hour to this day, never have I forgotten thee ! ”

The old man ceased speaking, and his grandchild, now able to endure the scene (for strong passion is its own support), glided softly to a little table, and bringing a cup in which a cordial had been mixed, held it in his small soft hands to his grandfather’s lips. He drank, and then said, “ Come closer to me, Jamie, and kiss me for thine own and thy father’s sake ; ” and as the child fondly pressed his rosy lips on those of his grandfather, so white and withered, the tears fell over all the old man’s face, and then trickled down on the golden head of the child, at last sobbing in his bosom.

“ Jamie, thy own father has forgotten thee in thy infancy, and me in my old age ; but, Jamie, forget not thou thy father nor thy mother, for that thou knowest and feelest is the commandment of God.”

The broken-hearted boy could give no reply. He had gradually stolen closer and closer unto the old loving man, and now was lying, worn out with sorrow, drenched and dissolved in tears, in his grandfather’s bosom. His mother had sunk down on her knees and hid her face with her hands. “ Oh ! if my husband knew but of this — he would never, never desert his dying father ! ” and I now knew that the Elder was praying on his death-bed for a disobedient and wicked son.

At this affecting time the minister took the family Bible on his knees, and

said, “ Let us sing to the praise and glory of God, part of the fifteenth psalm ; ” and he read, with a tremulous and broken voice, those beautiful verses :—

“ Within thy tabernacle, Lord,
Who shall abide with thee ?
And in Thy high and holy hill
Who shall a dweller be ?
The man that walketh uprightly,
And worketh righteousness,
And as he thinketh in his heart,
So doth he truth express.”

The small congregation sang the noble hymn of the psalmist to “ plaintiff Martyrs, worthy of the name.” The dying man himself, ever and anon, joined in the holy music ; and when it feebly died away on his quivering lips, he continued still to follow the tune with the motion of his withered hand, and eyes devoutly and humbly lifted up to heaven. Nor was the sweet voice of his loving grandchild unheard ; as if the strong fit of deadly passion had dissolved in the music, he sang with a sweet and silvery voice, that, to a passer-by, had seemed that of perfect happiness—a hymn sung in joy upon its knees by gladsome childhood before it flew out among the green hills, to quiet labour or gleesome play. As that sweetest voice came from the bosom of the old man, where the singer lay in affection, and blended with his own so tremulous, never had I felt so affectingly brought before me the beginning and the end of life, the cradle and the grave.

Ere the psalm was yet over, the door was opened, and a tall fine-looking man entered, but with a lowering and dark countenance, seemingly in sorrow, in misery, and remorse. Agitated, confounded, and awe-struck by the melancholy and dirge-like music, he sat down on a chair, and looked with a ghastly face towards his father’s death-bed. When the psalm ceased, the Elder said with a solemn voice, “ My son, thou art come in time to receive thy father’s blessing. May the remembrance of

what will happen in this room before the morning again shine over the Hazel Glen win thee from the error of thy ways ! Thou art here, to witness the mercy of thy God and thy Saviour, whom thou hast forgotten."

The minister looked, if not with a stern, yet with an upbraiding countenance, on the young man, who had not recovered his speech, and said, "William ! for three years past your shadow has not darkened the door of the house of God. They who fear not the thunder may tremble at the still small voice ; now is the hour for repentance, that your father's spirit may carry up to heaven tidings of a contrite soul saved from the company of sinners ! "

The young man, with much effort, advanced to the bedside, and at last found voice to say, "Father, I am not without the affections of nature, and I hurried home as soon as I heard that the minister had been seen riding towards our house. I hope that you will yet recover, and if I have ever made you unhappy, I ask your forgiveness ; for though I may not think as you do on matters of religion, I have a human heart. Father ! I may have been unkind, but I am not cruel. I ask your forgiveness."

"Come nearer to me, William ; kneel down by the bedside, and let my hand find the head of my beloved son—for blindness is coming fast upon me. Thou wert my first-born, and thou art my only living son. All thy brothers and sisters are lying in the kirkyard, beside her whose sweet face thine own, William, did once so much resemble. Long wert thou the joy, the pride of my soul—ay, too much the pride, for there was not in all the parish such a man, such a son, as my own William. If thy heart has since been changed, God may inspire it again with right thoughts. Could I die for thy sake—could I purchase thy salvation with the outpouring of thy father's blood—but this the Son

of God has done for thee, who hast denied Him ! I have sorely wept for thee—ay, William, when there was none near me—even as David wept for Absalom, for thee, my son, my son ! "

A long deep groan was the only reply ; but the whole body of the kneeling man was convulsed ; and it was easy to see his sufferings, his contrition, his remorse, and his despair. The pastor said, with a sterner voice and austerer countenance than were natural to him, "Know you whose hand is now lying on your rebellious head ? But what signifies the word father to him who has denied God, the Father of us all ?"— "Oh ! press him not so hardly," said the weeping wife, coming forward from a dark corner of the room, where she had tried to conceal herself in grief, fear, and shame. "Spare, oh ! spare my husband—he has ever been kind to me ;" and with that she knelt down beside him, with her long, soft, white arms mournfully and affectionately laid across his neck. "Go thou, likewise, my sweet little Jamie," said the Elder, "go even out of my bosom, and kneel down beside thy father and thy mother, so that I may bless you all at once, and with one yearning prayer." The child did as that solemn voice commanded, and knelt down somewhat timidly by his father's side ; nor did that unhappy man decline encircling with his arm the child too much neglected, but still dear to him as his own blood, in spite of the deadening and debasing influence of infidelity.

"Put the Word of God into the hands of my son, and let him read aloud to his dying father the 25th, 26th, and 27th verses of the eleventh chapter of the Gospel according to St John." The pastor went up to the kneelers, and, with a voice of pity, condolence, and pardon, said, "There was a time when none, William, could read the Scriptures better than couldst thou—can it be that the son of my friend hath for-

gotten the lessons of his youth?" He had not forgotten them ; there was no need for the repentant sinner to lift up his eyes from the bedside. The sacred stream of the Gospel had worn a channel in his heart, and the waters were again flowing. With a choked voice he said, "Jesus said unto her, I am the Resurrection and the Life : he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live : and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord ; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."

"That is not an unbeliever's voice," said the dying man triumphantly ; "nor, William, hast thou an unbeliever's heart. Say that thou believest in what thou hast now read, and thy father will

die happy!"—"I do believe ; and as thou forgivest me, so may I be forgiven by my Father who is in heaven."

The Elder seemed like a man suddenly inspired with a new life. His faded eyes kindled—his pale cheeks glowed—his palsied hands seemed to wax strong—and his voice was clear as that of manhood in its prime. "Into Thy hands, O God, I commit my spirit!"—and so saying, he gently sank back on his pillow ; and I thought I heard a sigh. There was then a long deep silence, and the father, and mother, and child rose from their knees. The eyes of us all were turned towards the white placid face of the figure now stretched in everlasting rest ; and without lamentations, save the silent lamentations of the resigned soul, we stood around the "Death-bed of the Elder."

A HIGHLAND FEUD.

BY SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THE principal possessors of the Hebrides were originally of the name of MacDonald, the whole being under the government of a succession of chiefs, who bore the name of Donald of the Isles, and were possessed of authority almost independent of the kings of Scotland. But this great family becoming divided into two or three branches, other chiefs settled in some of the islands, and disputed the property of the original proprietors. Thus, the MacLeods, a powerful and numerous clan, who had extensive estates on the mainland, made themselves masters, at a very early period, of a great part of the large island of Skye, seized upon much of the Long Island, as the isles of Lewis and Harris are called, and fought fiercely with the MacDonalds and other tribes of the islands. The

following is an example of the mode in which these feuds were conducted :—

About the end of the sixteenth century, a boat, manned by one or two of the MacLeods, landed in Eigg, a small island peopled by the MacDonalds. They were at first hospitably received ; but having been guilty of some incivility to the young women of the island, it was so much resented by the inhabitants, that they tied the MacLeods hand and foot, and putting them on board of their own boat, towed it to the sea, and set it adrift, leaving the wretched men, bound as they were, to perish by famine, or by the winds and waves, as chance should determine. But fate so ordered it, that a boat belonging to the Laird of MacLeod fell in with that which had the captives on board, and brought them in safety to the Laird's

castle of Dunvegan, in Skye, where they complained of the injury which they had sustained from the MacDonalds of Eigg. MacLeod, in great rage, put to sea with his galleys, manned by a large body of his people, which the men of Eigg could not entertain any rational hope of resisting. Learning that their incensed enemy was approaching with superior forces, and deep vows of revenge, the inhabitants, who knew they had no mercy to expect at MacLeod's hands, resolved, as the best chance of safety in their power, to conceal themselves in a large cavern on the sea-shore.

This place was particularly well-calculated for that purpose. The entrance resembles that of a fox-earth, being an opening so small that a man cannot enter save by creeping on hands and knees. A rill of water falls from the top of the rock, and serves, or rather served at the period we speak of, wholly to conceal the aperture. A stranger, even when apprised of the existence of such a cave, would find the greatest difficulty in discovering the entrance. Within, the cavern rises to a great height, and the floor is covered with white dry sand. It is extensive enough to contain a great number of people. The whole inhabitants of Eigg, who, with their wives and families, amounted to nearly two hundred souls, took refuge within its precincts.

MacLeod arrived with his armament, and landed on the island, but could discover no one on whom to wreak his vengeance—all was desert. The MacLeods destroyed the huts of the islanders, and plundered what property they could discover; but the vengeance of the chieftain could not be satisfied with such petty injuries. He knew that the inhabitants must either have fled in their boats to one of the islands possessed by the MacDonalds, or that they must be concealed somewhere in Eigg. After

making a strict but unsuccessful search for two days, MacLeod had appointed the third to leave his anchorage, when, in the gray of the morning, one of the seamen beheld, from the deck of his galley, the figure of a man on the island. This was a spy whom the MacDonalds, impatient of their confinement in the cavern, had imprudently sent out to see whether MacLeod had retired or no. The poor fellow, when he saw himself discovered, endeavoured, by doubling after the manner of a hare or fox, to obliterate the track of his footsteps, and prevent its being discovered where he had re-entered the cavern. But all his art was in vain; the invaders again landed, and tracked him to the entrance of the cavern.

MacLeod then summoned those who were within it, and called upon them to deliver the individuals who had maltreated his men, to be disposed of at his pleasure. The MacDonalds, still confident in the strength of their fastness, which no assailant could enter but on hands and knees, refused to surrender their clansmen.

MacLeod then commenced a dreadful work of indiscriminate vengeance. He caused his people, by means of a ditch cut above the top of the rock, to turn away the stream of water which fell over the entrance of the precipice. This being done, the MacLeods collected all the combustibles which could be found on the island, particularly quantities of dry heather, piled them up against the aperture, and maintained an immense fire for many hours, until the smoke, penetrating into the inmost recesses of the cavern, stifled to death every creature within. There is no doubt of the truth of this story, dreadful as it is. The cavern is often visited by strangers; and I have myself seen the place, where the bones of the murdered MacDonalds still remain, lying as thick on the floor of the cave as in the charnel-house of a church.

THE RESURRECTION MEN,

By D. M. MOIR, M.D.

How then was the Devil drest?
 He was in his Sunday's best ;
 His coat was red, and his breeches were blue,
 With a hole behind, where his tail came through.

Over the hill, and over the dale,
 And he went over the plain :
 And backward and forward he switch'd his tail,
 As a gentleman switches his cane.

Coleridge.

ABOUT this time* there arose a great sough and surmise that some loons were playing false with the kirkyard, howking up the bodies from their damp graves, and hurling them away to the college. Words canna describe the fear, and the dool, and the misery it caused. All flocked to the kirk yett ; and the friends of the newly buried stood by the mools, which were yet dark, and the brown, newly-cast divots, that had not yet ta'en root, looking with mournful faces, to descry any tokens of sinking in.

I'll never forget it. I was standing by when three young lads took shools, and, lifting up the truff, proceeded to howk down to the coffin, wherein they had laid the gray hairs of their mother. They looked wild and bewildered like, and the glance of their een was like that of folk out of a mad-house ; and none dared in the world to have spoken to them. They didna even speak to ane anither ; but wrought on wi' a great hurry till the spades struck on the coffin-lid—which was broken. The dead-claithes were there huddled a' thegither in a nook, but the dead was gane. I took haud o' Willie Walker's arm, and looked down. There was a cauld sweat all ower me ;—losh me ! but I was terribly frightened and eerie. Three mair graves were opened, and a' just alike, save and except that of a wee

* See ante, "Benjie's Christening," page 214.

unkirstened wean, which was aff bodily, coffin and a'.

There was a burst of righteous indignation throughout the parish ; nor without reason. Tell me that doctors and graduates maun hae the dead ; but tell it not to Mansie Wauch, that our hearts maun be trampled in the mire of scorn, and our best feelings laughed at, in order that a bruise may be properly plastered up, or a sair head cured. Verily, the remedy is waur than the disease.

But what remead ? It was to watch in the session-house, with loaded guns, night about, three at a time. I never likit to gang into the kirkyard after darkening, let-a-be to sit there through a lang winter night, windy and rainy, it may be, wi' nane but the dead around us. Save us ! it was an unco thought, and garred a' my flesh creep ; but the cause was gude,—my spirit was roused, and I was determined no to be daunted.

I counted and counted, but the dread day at length came, and I was summonsed. All the leivelang afternoon, when ca'ing the needle upon the brod, I tried to whistle Jenny Nettles, Niel Gow, and ither funny tunes, and whiles crooned to mysel between hands ; but my consternation was visible, and a' wadna do.

It was in November, and the cauld glimmering sun sank behind the Pent-

lands. The trees had been shorn of their frail leaves ; and the misty night was closing fast in upon the dull and short day ; but the candles glittered at the shop windows, and leery-light-the-lamps was brushing about wi' his ladder in his oxter, and bleezing flamboy sparkling out behind him. I felt a kind of qualm of faintness and down-sinking about my heart and stomach, to the dispelling of which I took a thimbleful of spirits, and, tying my red comforter about my neck, I marched briskly to the session-house. A neighbour (Andrew Goldie, the pensioner) lent me his piece, and loaded it to me. He took tent that it was only half-cock, and I wrapped a napkin round the dog-head, for it was raining. No being acquaint wi' guns, I keepit the muzzle aye awa frae me ; as it is every man's duty no to throw his precious life into jeopardy.

A furm was set before the session-house fire, which bleezed brightly, nor had I onythought that such an unearthly place could have been made to look half so comfortable, either by coal or candle ; so my speerits rose up as if a weight had been ta'en aff them, and I wondered in my bravery, that a man like me could be afread of onything. Nobody was there but a touzy, ragged, halflins callant of thirteen (for I speired his age), wi' a desperate dirty face, and lang carroty hair, tearing a speldrin wi' his teeth, which lookit lang and sharp eneugh, and throwing the skin and lugs intil the fire.

We sat for amaist an hour thegither, cracking the best way we could in sic a place ; nor was onybody mair likely to cast up. The night was now pit-mirk ; the wind soughed amid the headstanes and railings of the gentry (for we maun a' dee) ; and the black corbies in the steeple-holes cackled and crawled in a fearsome manner. A' at ance we heard a lonesome sound ; and my heart began to play pit-pat—my skin grew a' rough,

(5)

like a poukit chicken—and I felt as if I didna ken what was the matter with me. It was only a false alarm, however, being the warning of the clock ; and in a minute or twa thereafter the bell struck ten. Oh, but it was a lonesome and dreary sound ! Every chap gaed through my breast like the dunt of a forehammer.

Then up and spak the red headed laddie : “It's no fair ; anither should hae come by this time. I wad rin awa hame, only I'm frightened to gang out my lane. Do ye think the doup o' that candle wad carry in my cap ?”

“Na, na, lad ; we maun bide here, as we are here now. Leave me alone ! Lord save us ! and the yett lockit, and the bethrel sleepin' wi' the key in his breek-pouches ! We canna win out now, though we would,” answered I, trying to look brave, though half frightened out of my seven senses. “Sit down, sit down ; I've baith whisky and porter wi' me. Hae, man, there's a cauker to keep your heart warm ; and set down that bottle,” quoth I, wiping the sawdust aff it with my hand, “to get a toast ; I'se warrant it for Deacon Jafrey's best brown stout.”

The wind blew higher, and like a hurricane ; the rain began to fall in perfect spouts ; the auld kirk rumbled, and rowed, and made a sad soughing ; and the bourtree tree behind the house, where auld Cockburn, that cuttit his throat, was buried, creakit and crazed in a frightful manner ; but as to the roaring of the troubled waters, and the bumming in the lum-head, they were past a' power of description. To make bad worse, just in the heart of the brattle, the grating sound of the yett turning on its rusty hinges was but too plainly heard. What was to be done ? I thought of our baith running away ; and then of our locking oursels in, and firing through the door ; but wha was to pull the trigger ?

T

Gudeness watch ower us ! I tremble yet when I think on't. We were perfectly between the deil and the deep sea—either to stand and fire our gun, or rin and be shot at. It was really a hang choice. As I stood swithering and shaking, the laddie ran to the door, and throwin' round the key, clapped his back till't. Oh ! how I lookit at him, as he stude, for a gliff, like a magpie hearkening wi' his lug cockit up, or rather like a terrier watching a rotten.

"They're coming ! they're coming !" he cried out ; "cock the piece, ye sumph," while the red hair rose up from his pow like feathers ; "they're coming, I hear them tramping on the gravel !" Out he stretched his arms against the wall, and brizzed his back against the door like mad ; as if he had been Samson pushing over the pillars in the house of Dagon. "For the Lord's sake, prime the gun," he cried out, "or our throats will be cut frae lug to lug, before we can say Jack Robinson ! See that there's priming in the pan !"

I did the best I could ; but my hale strength could hardly lift up the piece, which waggled to and fro like a cock's tail on a rainy day ; my knees knockit against ane anither, and though I was resigned to dee—I trust I was resigned to dee—'od, but it was a frightfu' thing to be out of ane's bed, and to be murdered in an auld session-house, at the dead hour of night, by unyeartly resurrection-men—or rather let me call them devils incarnate —wrapt up in dreadnoughts, wi' blackit faces, pistols, big sticks, and other deadly weapons.

A snuff-snuffing was heard ; and through below the door I saw a pair of glancing black een. 'Od, but my heart nearly loupit aff the bit—a snouff and a gur-gurring, and ower a' the plain tramp of a man's heavy tuckets and cuddy-heels amang the gravel. Then cam a great slap like thunder on the wall ; and the laddie quitting his

grip, fell down, crying, "Fire, fire !—murder ! holy murder !"

"Wha's there ?" growled a deep rough voice ; "open—I'm a friend."

I tried to speak, but could not ; something like a halfpenny roll was sticking in my throat, so I tried to cough it up, but it wadna come. "Gie the pass-word, then," said the laddie, staring as if his een wad loupen out ; "gie the pass-word !"

First cam a loud whussle, and then "Copmahagen," answered the voice. Oh ! what a relief ! The laddie started up like ane crazy wi' joy. "Ou ! ou !" cried he, throwin' round the key, and rubbing his hands, "by jingo ! it's the bethrel—it's the bethrel—it's auld Isaac himsel !"

First rushed in the dog, and then Isaac, wi' his glazed hat, slouched ower his brow, and his horn bowet glimmering by his knee. "Has the French landit, do ye think ? Losh keep us a'" said he, wi' a smile on his half-idiot face (for he was a kind of a sort of a natural, wi' an infirmity in his leg). "'Od sauf us, man, put by your gun. Ye dinna mean to shoot me, do ye ? What are ye aboot here wi' the door lockit ? I just keppit four resurrectioners loupin' ower the wa ?"

"Gude guide us !" I said, taking a long breath to drive the blude frae my heart, and something relieved by Isaac's company. "Come now, Isaac, ye're just giein' us a fright. Isn't that true, Isaac ?"

"Yes, I'm joking,—and what for no ? But they might have been, for onything ye wad hae hindered them to the contrair, I'm thinking. Na, na, ye maunna lock the door ; that's no fair play."

When the door was put ajee, and the fum set forntent the fire, I gied Isaac a dram to keep his heart up on sic a cauld, stormy night. 'Od, but he was a droll fallow, Isaac. He sung and leuch as if he had been boozing in

Lucky Tamson's, wi' some of his drucken cronies. Fient a hair cared he about auld kirks, or kirkyards, or vouts, or through-stanes, or dead folk in their winding-sheets, wi' the wet grass growing ower them ; and at last I began to brighten up a wee mysel ; so when he had gone ower a good few funny stories, I said to him, quoth I, "Mony folk, I daresay, mak mair noise about their sitting up in a kirkyard than it's a' worth. There's naething here to harm us."

"I beg to differ wi' ye there," answered Isaac, taking out his horn mull from his coat pouch, and tapping on the lid in a queer style—"I could gie anither version of that story. Did ye no ken of three young doctors—Eirish students—alang wi' some resurrectioners, as waff and wild as themselves, firing shottie for shottie wi' the guard at Kirkmabreck, and lodging three slugs in ane o' their backs, forbye firing a ramrod through anither ane's hat?"

This was a wee alarming. "No," quoth I—"no, Isaac, man, I ne'er heard o't."

"But let alane resurrectioners, do ye no think there is sic a thing as ghaists? Guide ye, my man, my granny could hae telled ye as muckle about them as wad hae filled a minister's sermons from June to January."

"Kay—kay—that's a buff," I said. "Are there nae cutty-stool businesses—are there nae marriages gaun, Isaac?" for I was keen to change the subject.

"Ye may kay—kay—as ye like, though ; I can just tell ye this—ye'll mind auld Armstrong, wi' the leather breeks, and the brown three-storey wig —him that was the grave-digger? Weel, he saw a ghaist wi' his leeveng een—aye, and what's better, in this very kirkyard too. It was a cauld spring morning, and daylight just coming in, when he cam to the yett yonder, thinking to meet his man, paidling Jock—but Jock had sleepit in, and wasna

there. Weel, to the wast corner ower yonder he gaed, and throwing his coat ower a headstane, and his hat on the tap o't, he dug awa wi' his spade, casting out the mools, and the coffin-handles, and the green banes, and sic-like, till he stoppit a wee to tak breath.—What ! are ye whistling to yoursel ?" quo' Isaac to me, "and no hearing what's God's truth ?"

"Ou ay," said I, "but ye didna tell me if ony body was cried last Sunday ?" I wad hae given every farthing I had made by the needle to hae been at that blessed time in my bed wi' my wife and wean. Ay, how I was gruwing ! I mostly chacked aff my tongue in chitterin'. But a' wadna do.

"Weel, speaking of ghaists ;—when he was resting on his spade, he looked up to the steeple, to see what o'clock it was. wondering what way Jock hadna come,—when lo, and behold ! in the lang diced window of the kirk yonder, he saw a lady a' in white, wi' her hands clasped thegither, looking out to the kirkyard at him.

"He couldna believe his een, so he rabbit them wi' his sark sleeve, but she was still there bodily, and, keeping ae ee on her, and anither on his road to the yett, he drew his coat and hat to him below his arm, and aff like mad, throwing his shool half a mile ahint him. Jock fand that ; for he was coming singing in at the yett, when his maister ran clean ower the tap o' him, and capseized him like a toom barrel ; and never stoppin' till he was in at his ain house, and the door baith bolted and barred at his tail.

"Did ye ever hear the like of that, Mansie ? Weel man, I'll explain the hale history o't to ye. Ye see,—'od ! how sound that callant's sleeping," continued Isaac ; "he's snoring like a nine-year-auld."

I was glad he had stoppit, for I was like to sink through the grund wi' fear ; but na, it wadna do.

"Dinna ye ken—sauf us ! what a fearsome night this is ! The trees 'll be a' broken. What a noise in the lum ! I dare say there is some auld hag of a witch-wife gaun to come rumble doun't. It's no the first time, I'll swear. Hae ye a silver sixpence ? Wad ye like that ?" he bawled up the chimley. "Ye'll hae heard," said he, "lang ago, that a wee murdered wean was buried—didna ye hear a voice ?—was buried below that corner—the hearthstane there, where the laddie's lying on ?"

I had now lost my breath, so that I couldna stop him.

"Ye never heard tell o't, didna ye ? Weel, I'se tell't ye.—Sauf us ! what swirls o' smoke coming down the chimley—I could swear something no canny's

stopping up the lum-head—gang out and see!"

At that moment, a clap like thunder was heard—the candle was driven ower—the sleeping laddie roared "Help !" and "Murder !" and "Thieves !" and as the furm on which we were sitting played flee backwards, cripple Isaac bellowed out, "I'm dead !—I'm killed ! shot through the head !—oh, oh, oh !"

Surely I had fainted away ; for when I came to mysel, I found my red comforter loosed ; my face a' wet—Isaac rubbing down my waistcoat with his sleeve—the laddie swigging ale out of a bicker—and the brisk brown stout, which, by casting its cork, had caused a' the alarm, whizz—whizz—whizzing in the chimley-lug.—*Mansie Wauch.*

MARY WILSON.

On her white arm down sunk her head,
She shivered, sighed, and died.

Mallet.

JOSEPH WILSON was a farmer in the parish of D——. He possessed enough of the goods of this world to make him be respected by all his neighbours, and esteemed by them as the most careful, well-doing man in the parish. Joseph knew well enough the value of his riches; but still the jewel which was nearest and dearest to his heart was his only daughter, the beautiful and innocent Mary Wilson. He loved her—and his love was not greater than that of Marjory, his wife—more than all he possessed ; and when rallied by his neighbours on the depth of his purse, he was wont to say, that the brightest guinea he adored was the face of his own sweet Mary. While a child she was indulged ; and the smiles of her pretty round face, and her caresses and kisses, gained all her

little wants from her doting parents. While the daughters of other farmers assisted in household management, she was never required to soil her fingers, but would skip and dance before her father over the fields and the meadows, and sport as the little lamb round her parent. As she advanced from childhood, her days were clad in the same fair livery of joy. She danced and she toyed, and though no longer dandled and prattling on the knees of her parents, she made them the confidants of all her light amusements and secrets, and she sang to them all the legendary ballads which she had picked up, and their hearts were still gladdened in the little offspring of their wedlock.

From a child to the age of fifteen, she had attended the parish school along with

all the boys and girls, both high and low. Here she was a general favourite, and the youths would crowd to attend Mary Wilson home, because she had the prettiest little lips, and the kindest laugh, of any girl in the school ; and happy was he, and proud of himself, who obtained her hand to dance at the Candlemas ball. The father and mother saw no harm in the adulations paid to their daughter, for they did not equal their own ; and the good old schoolmaster loved to see Mary the favourite of all his youths, because she was a good scholar and the best singer in the school and in the church, and on that account the greatest favourite with himself. When he raised the tune on the Sabbath to the praise of the Lord, he would turn in his desk to the seat of Mary Wilson for her accompaniment, and, when her sweet voice was once heard through the church, then would the whole congregation join, and every young man emulate himself to gain the approbation of the fair and goodly singer. To those who are in the practice of attending a country parish church, I need not mention in how high estimation the best female singer is held amongst all the young men of the country side.

At the age of fifteen she was removed to a boarding-school in town. Here she remained two years, and though she perfected herself in accomplishments, and though many young men dangled after her, yet her heart, albeit naturally merry, was sensitive ; and vapid appeared to her the revel in the midnight ball compared to the dance on the heaven-canopied lawn, when heart panted with heart, and every spirit caught the existing flame of pleasure ; and frigid and disagreeable seemed to her the lips from whom politeness extorted studied words, compared to the lips of those who spoke the warm and momentary feelings of the mind. She returned to the place of her youth, and sought again for mirth and pleasure

amongst her old companions ; but she was changed both in person and in mind. She was no longer the light airy girl, but she was now the woman glowing in all the richness and luxuriance of female beauty. She could not now associate with the young men, and be their umpire in all their disputes and contentions, as in the days of her youth ; nor could she find that delight in the company of her female companions which she did ere her departure. Mary was a flower,—

A violet by a messy stone,
Half hid from human eyes,

that, left undisturbed on the wild, would have flourished the loveliest of her comrades, but once transplanted for a little time into the garden, she took not so well when removed again to her native soil. Though she danced, and though she sung, as she was wont, still part of that which she had seen in town mingled itself with that which she enjoyed in the country ; the customs of a populous city were not to be easily banished from her, and she could not be so happy as formerly. To her father and her mother she was the same adored object ; both rejoiced in her beauty, and while they would at times talk of who might be her husband, they would soon chase away the idea as that of a robber that would deprive them of their all.

A little after Mary's return to her father's, Charles Morley returned likewise from the University. He was the son of the laird, but he had been at the parish school with the young men, and once been their constant companion. He hunted for birds' nests with them, he had fished with them, he had often broken into his father's garden with them, and Morley was as one of themselves. He had ever been attentive to Mary Wilson ; and she, if the umpire of a race or a wrestle, was always happy when she could adjudge

the honour of victory to Charlie Morley, because he would at times snatch a kiss from her, and would always take her hand and assist her when wading through the burns. He had completed his education at the University, and, while he had acquired knowledge, he had lost the command of himself. Long did he withstand the temptations laid in his way by more wicked companions, and long did he endeavour to retain the principles his old master had instilled into him ; but in vain : while the sage was discoursing on the nobleness of man's nature, and the blessings of wisdom, and while he acquiesced in all the learned man said, Charles Morley had become one of the most profligate young men in the college.

When he returned to the country, he often met Mary Wilson, both at her father's and at the houses of the other tenants. Their meetings became frequent, and though they never made assignations, yet Charles Morley was sure to meet with Mary Wilson in her walks. She saw no harm in meeting with her old school companion, but he had his schemes laid ; he saw her leaning on him in all her maiden fondness ; he knew human nature, and he knew that if he attempted to wrong her in their early meetings, he would discover his baseness and be spurned. He suffered therefore her affection to grow upon her, and, when it had fully ripened, he gave her his feigned love, and received hers, as the offerings of a devotee to his God, in return. For some time she was almost happy, and though she knew her situation must soon be known, she was certain it would not be so till she was the wife of Charles Morley—for so he had promised ; and could she doubt him ? Time, however, flew on, and Mary becoming discontented and frightened, Morley, in order to draw her from a place where discovery would have been ruin to himself, proposed flight. When a woman

has once gone astray, the man who has ruined her does not require great efforts to persuade her to anything. She is his, body and soul. Mary one night bade adieu to the house of her father, and fled with her paramour to an obscure lodging in the capital.

Sad was the morning which arose to her parents on the discovery of her departure, and more especially the cause of it, which neighbours were not slow in surmising and hinting. Her mother wept in all the bitterness of woe, but her tears could not express the sorrow of her heart. The father was louder in his grief ; he wept and raved by turns. Now he grieved for her helplessness, and prayed to God to grant her mercy ; then he cursed the hour in which she was born, and called down curses on him who had ruined the hope of his days. In a little time their violent grief had subsided ; the fugitives could not be traced, and neither Joseph nor his wife suffered that name which was nearest to their hearts to pass their lips. But when Marjory would see the work-basket of her daughter, she would throw herself on her bed and weep ; and Joseph, when anything came in his way that strongly associated the idea of his Mary, would seize his hat, rush from the house, and give utterance to a grief which he would fain conceal from an already heart-broken wife.

It was about five months after the departure of Mary, when Marjory, hearing one day a gentle tap at the door, went to open it. It was Mary who knocked ; but oh ! how changed from her who once was the boast of the country side ! She was pale and emaciated, her eye had lost its lustre, and she seemed to be worse than the shadow of her former loveliness. Her dress was ragged and torn, and in her arms she bore a child—the ill-fated offspring of her illicit amour. Her mother held the door for some minutes, while she surveyed with melancholy eyes the woe-

worn condition of her daughter. "Mary," she said—and her manner was composed—"Mary, you did not need formerly to knock at the door of your father's house." Mary stepped over the threshold, and staggering, rather than walking, forward into the kitchen, threw herself on the dais. "Mary," said her mother again, "where have you been? Are you a married woman? Better be the wife of the poorest man than ____." Here her daughter buried her face in the bosom of her child, and sobbed aloud. "Mary," again said her mother, "I reproach you not. God will grant you His forgiveness, as I do mine; I feel I cannot live long after this stroke, and we must all meet with trials on this side the grave; but Mary, oh, my darling Mary," and she threw her arms around her daughter's neck and kissed her, "your father! how will you bear the look of your father?" Her words were scarce finished when Joseph entered. He laid his hat on the table, he shaded back his gray hairs, and clasped his hands, and, from his hard-knitted brows, he seemed about to pray the vengeance of God on her who had so dishonoured his old age. He looked at his daughter; her eyes were on him, and her once lovely arm was extended as if to avoid the threatened curse; his brows relaxed, he unclasped his hands, and placing them on his face, wept aloud. She laid her child on the seat, she was at his feet on her knees, and her arms grasped him by the waist. He felt her, he placed one hand in hers, and raised the other as he said, "May God forgive thee, my daughter! Ah, Mary, Mary, thou art still my offspring, though thou art a defiled vessel in the eyes of God and man!"

On the second Sunday after her return to her father's, she prepared to attend her purification in the kirk. She had gone through all preliminary forms, and was now once more to take her seat in the house of God. She went

muffled up and attended by her father and mother, and was not recognised. During the singing of the first and second psalms she was silent; but at the third, her father desired her to sing to the praise of that God who had brought her back as a lost sheep into His fold. In the second line she joined the tune; but weakly and feebly compared to that voice which used to lead the whole kirk. It was, however, recognised; there was a more than momentary stop while all eyes were turned towards her; and her old master, turning towards the seat of his old favourite, strove, while the big tears rolled down his cheeks, and his voice faltered, to bear her through the tune. The minister again rose to prayer: he stretched his hands to heaven, and prayed for all mankind; he prayed for the sinner that had gone astray, and that the Father of mercies would have compassion on the wretched, and again take her into his bosom. There was not a dry eye in the kirk. Humanity for once prevailed, and human selfishness forgot itself in the woes of a fellow-mortals. She, for whom they were supplicating, stood with her hands firmly clasped, her eyes closed, and her head bowed to the earth; and though her father and mother sobbed and wept, she moved not, but, when service was over, she walked with a firm step, and uncovered face and head, through all the parishioners, to her father's dwelling. She laid herself down on her bed, and in three weeks the grave yawned and closed on the unfortunate Mary Wilson.

A few weeks ago, I made it in my way to pass through D_____. Many revolutions of a tropical sun had passed over my head since I had left my native land, and, on my return, I was anxious to visit that spot where I passed many of my happiest days, even though I knew that all my relatives were long since in the cold grave. As I turned round the hill, the well-known

cottage of Joseph Wilson came in view, and the story of his daughter flashed vividly on my mind. I approached a countryman, who was standing with his plough and horses at the end of a furrow, wiping the sweat from his brow, and inquired, if Joseph Wilson was still living.

"Na," replied he, "nor ane o' his kith or kindred. The poor wean that suckled frae an unfortunate breast died soon after his mother, like a young shoot or sapling that has been rashly cut down. Then Marjory soon followed, and Joseph became a heart-broken man ; a'thing gaed to wreck, and he died on the parish. There are sad ups and downs in life, and nae the lightest thing to disturb our balance is the waywardness of a child."

"Poor Mary Wilson!" said I. She became as visible to my mind's eye as when I saw her winding in the mazes of a dance in all her maiden beauty and innocence ; and the lines of my favourite poet came to my lips :—

When lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds, too late, that men betray,
What charms can soothe her melancholy ?
What art can wash her guilt away ?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom, is—to die.

"And what has become of the laird?" said I, looking to the well-known mansion.

"The old laird is dead, and the young one, that was once expected to be laird, lies rotting with many carcases in a foreign trench. He broke his father's heart, spent his substance, and died a common soldier. The comforting dew of heaven seldom falls on him who disregards its commands : seldom does the friendly hands of woman smooth the dying bed of the seducer ; and still more rarely does the insulter of a parent's gray hairs sleep in the same grave wi' him. Ye canna lament Mary Wilson mair than I do."

"Do you possess her father's land?" said I.

"Ay do I," replied the rustic,—apparently much moved ; "and it may be that I would hae ploughed them mair pleasantly, and whistled mair cheerfully to my horses, had Mary shared it with a plain man, as became her station ; but we maunna repine."

I had no wish to proceed farther ; and in my ride back I enjoyed one of those deep, melancholy musings, far more congenial to my mind than the most ecstatic dreams of the most ambitious men.—*Aberdeen Censor.*

THE LAIRD OF CASSWAY.

BY JAMES HOGG, THE "ETTRICK SHEPHERD."

CHAPTER I.

THERE is an old story which I have often heard related, about a great Laird of Cassway, in an outer corner of Dumfriesshire, of the name of Beattie, and his two sons. The incidents of the story are of a very extraordinary nature.

This Beattie had occasion to be almost constantly in England, because, as my informant said, he took a great hand in government affairs, from which I conclude that the tradition had its rise about the time of the civil wars ; for about the

close of that time the Scotts took advantage of the times to put the Beatties down, who for some previous ages had maintained the superiority of that district.

Be that as it may, the Laird of Cassway's second son, Francis, fell desperately in love with a remarkably beautiful girl, the eldest daughter of Henry Scott of Drumfielding, a gentleman, but still only a retainer, and far beneath Beattie of Cassway, both in point of wealth and influence. Francis was a scholar newly returned from the university ; was tall, handsome, of a pale complexion, and gentlemanly appearance, while Thomas, the eldest son, was fair, ruddy, and stout made, a perfect picture of health and good humour, —a sportsman, a warrior, and a jovial blade ; one who would not suffer a fox to get rest in the whole moor district. He rode the best horse, kept the best hounds, played the best fiddle, danced the best country bumpkin, and took the stoutest draught of mountain dew, of any man between Erick Brae and Teviot Stone, and was altogether the sort of young man, that whenever he cast his eyes on a pretty girl, either at chapel or at weapon-shaw, she would hide her face, and giggle as if tickled by some unseen hand.

Now, though Thomas, or the Young Laird, as he was called, had only spoken once to Ellen Scott in his life, at which time he chuckled her below the chin, and bid the deil take him if ever he saw as bonny a face in his whole born days ; yet for all that, Ellen loved him. It could not be said that she was "in love" with him, for a maiden's heart must be won before it is given absolutely away ; but hers gave him the preference to any other young man. She loved to see him, to hear of him, and to laugh at him ; and it was even observed by the domestics, that Tam Beattie o' the Cassway's name came oftener into her conversation than there was any good reason for.

Such was the state of affairs when Francis came home, and fell desperately in love with Ellen Scott ; and his father being in England, and he under no restraint, he went frequently to visit her. She received him with a kindness and affability that pleased him to the heart ; but he little wist that this was only a spontaneous and natural glow of kindness towards him because of his connections, and rather because he was the young laird of Cassway's only brother, than the poor but accomplished Francis Beattie, the scholar from Oxford.

He was, however, so much delighted with her, that he asked her father's permission to pay his addresses to her. Her father, who was a prudent and sensible man, answered him in this wise :—" That nothing would give him greater delight than to see his beloved Ellen joined with so accomplished and amiable a young gentleman in the bonds of holy wedlock, provided his father's assent was previously obtained. But as he himself was subordinate to another house, not on the best terms with the house of Cassway, he would not take it on him to sanction any such connection without the old Laird's full consent. That, moreover, as he, Francis Beattie, was just setting out in life as a lawyer, there was but too much reason to doubt that a matrimonial connection with Ellen at that time would be highly imprudent ; therefore it was not to be thought further of till the old laird was consulted. In the meantime, he should always be welcome to his house, and to his daughter's company, as he had the same confidence in his honour and integrity as if he had been a son of his own."

The young man thanked him affectionately, and could not help acquiescing in the truth of his remarks, promised not to mention matrimony farther till he had consulted his father, and added, —" But indeed you must excuse me, if

I avail myself of your permission to visit here often, as I am sensible that it will be impossible for me to live for any space of time out of my dear Ellen's sight." He was again assured of welcome, and the two parted mutually pleased.

Henry Scott of Drumfielding was a widower, with six daughters, over whom presided Mrs Jane Jerdan, their maternal aunt, an old maid, with fashions and ideas even more antiquated than herself. No sooner had the young wooer taken his leave than she bounced into the room, the only sitting apartment in the house, and said, in a loud, important whisper, "What's that young swankey of a lawyer wanting, that he's aye han-kering sae muckle about our town? I'll tell you what, brother Harry, it strikes me that he wants to make a wheelwright o' your daughter Nell. Now, gin he axes your consent to ony siccán thing, dinna ye grant it. That's a.' Tak an auld fool's advice gin ye wad prosper. Folk are a' wise ahint the hand, and sae will ye be."

"Dear Mrs Jane, what objections can you have to Mr Francis Beattie, the most accomplished young gentleman of the whole country?"

"'Complished gentleman! 'Complished kirn-milk! I'll tell ye what, brother Harry,—afore I were a landless lady, I wad rather be a tailor's lay-board. What has he to maintain a lady spouse with? The wind o' his lungs, forsooth!—thinks to sell that for goud in goupins. Hech me! Crazy wad they be wha wad buy it; and they wha trust to crazy people for their living will live but crazily. Tak an auld fool's advice gin ye wad prosper, else ye'll be wise ahint the hand. Have nae mair to do with him—Nell's bread for his betters; tell him that. Or, by my certie, gin I meet wi' him face to face, I'll tell him!"

"It would be unfriendly in me to keep aught a secret from you, sister,

considering the interest you have taken in my family. I *have* given him my consent to visit my daughter, but at the same time have restricted him from mentioning matrimony until he has consulted his father."

"And what has the visiting to gang for, then? Awa wi' him! Our Nell's food for his betters. What wad you think an she could get the young laird, his brother, wi' a blink o' her ee?"

"Never speak to me of that, Mrs Jane. I wad rather see the poorest of his shepherd lads coming to court my child than see him;" and with these words Henry left the room.

Mrs Jane stood long, making faces, shaking her apron with both hands, nodding her head, and sometimes giving a stamp with her foot. "I have set my face against that connexion," said she. "Our Nell's no made for a lady to a London lawyer. It wad set her rather better to be Lady of Cassway. The young laird for me! I'll hae the branks of love thrown ower the heads o' the twosome, tie the tangs thegither, and then let them gallop like twa kippled grews. My brother Harry's a simple man; he disna ken the credit that he has by his daughters—thanks to some other body than him! Niece Nell has a shape, an ee, and a lady-manner that wad kilhab the best lord o' the kingdom, were he to come under their influence and my manoeuvres. She's a Jerdan a' through; and that I'll let them ken! Folk are a' wise ahint the hand; credit only comes by catch and keep. Good night to a' younger brothers, puffings o' love vows, and sabs o' wind! Gie me the good green hills, the gruff wedders, and bobtailed yowes; and let the law and the gospel-men sell the wind o' their lungs as dear as they can!"

In a few days, Henry of Drumfielding was called out to attend his chief on some expedition; on which Mrs Jane, not caring to trust her message to any

other person, went over to Cassway, and invited the young laird to Drumfielding to see her niece, quite convinced that her charms and endowments would at once enslave the elder brother, as they had done the younger. Tam Beattie was delighted at finding such a good back friend as Mrs Jane, for he had not failed to observe, for a twelvemonth back, that Ellen Scott was very pretty, and either through chance or design, he asked Mrs Jane if the young lady was privy to this invitation.

"*She* privy to it!" exclaimed Mrs Jane, shaking her apron. "Ha, weel I wat, no! She wad soon hae flown in my face wi' her gibery and her jaukery, had I tauld her my errand; but the gowk kens what the tittling wants, although it is no aye crying, 'Give, give,' like the horse loch-leech."

"Does the horse-leech really cry that, Mrs Jane? I should think, from a view of its mouth, that it could scarcely cry anything," said Tom.

"Are ye sic a reprobate as to deny the words o' the Scripture, sir? Hech, wae's me! what some folk hae to answer for! We're a' wise ahint the hand. But hark ye,—come ye ower in time, else I am feared she may be settled for ever out o' your reach. Now, I canna bide to think on that, for I have always thought you twa made for ane anither. Let me take a look o' you frae tap to tae—O yes—made for ane anither. Come ower in time, before billy Harry come hame again; and let your visit be in timeous hours, else I'll gie you the back of the door to keep.—Wild reprobate!" she exclaimed to herself, on taking her leave; "to deny that the horse loch-leech can speak! Ha—ha—the young laird is the man for me!"

Thomas Beattie was true to his appointment, as may be supposed, and Mrs Jane having her niece dressed in style, he was perfectly charmed with her; and really it cannot be denied

that Ellen was as much delighted with him. She was young, gay, and frolicsome, and she never spent a more joyous and happy afternoon, or knew before what it was to be in a presence that delighted her so much. While they sat conversing, and apparently better satisfied with the company of each other than was likely to be regarded with indifference by any other individual aspiring to the favour of the young lady, the door was opened, and there entered no other than Francis Beattie! When Ellen saw her devoted lover appear thus suddenly, she blushed deeply, and her glee was damped in a moment. She looked rather like a condemned criminal, or at least a guilty creature, than what she really was,—a being over whose mind the cloud of guilt had never cast its shadow.

Francis loved her above all things on earth or in heaven, and the moment he saw her so much abashed at being surprised in the company of his brother, his spirit was moved to jealousy—to maddening and uncontrollable jealousy. His ears rang, his hair stood on end, and the contour of his face became like a bent bow. He walked up to his brother with his hand on his sword-hilt, and, in a state of excitement which rendered his words inarticulate, addressed him thus, while his teeth ground together like a horse-rattle:

"Pray, sir, may I ask you of your intentions, and of what you are seeking here?"

"I know not, Frank, what right you have to ask any such questions; but you will allow that I have a right to ask at you what you are seeking here at present, seeing you come so very inopportunely?"

"Sir," said Francis, whose passion could stay no farther parley, "dare you put it to the issue of the sword this moment?"

"Come now, dear Francis, do not act the fool and the madman both at a

time. Rather than bring such a dispute to the issue of the sword between two brothers who never had a quarrel in their lives, I propose that we bring it to a much more temperate and decisive issue here where we stand, by giving the maiden her choice. Stand you there at that corner of the room, I at this, and Ellen Scott in the middle ; let us both ask, and to whomsoever she comes, the prize be his. Why should we try to decide, by the loss of one of our lives, what we cannot decide, and what may be decided in a friendly and rational way in one minute ?”

“ It is easy for you, sir, to talk temperately and with indifference of such a trial, but not so with me. This young lady is dear to my heart.”

“ Well, but so is she to mine. Let us, therefore, appeal to the lady at once whose claim is the best ; and, as your pretensions are the highest, do you ask her first.”

“ My dearest Ellen,” said Francis, humbly and affectionately, “ you know that my whole soul is devoted to your love, and that I aspire to it only in the most honourable way ; put an end to this dispute, therefore, by honouring me with the preference which the unequivocal offer of my hand merits.”

Ellen stood dumb and motionless, looking stedfastly down at the hem of her jerkin, which she was nibbling with her hands. She dared not lift an eye to either of the brothers, though apparently conscious that she ought to have recognised the claims of Francis.

“ Ellen, I need not tell you that I love you,” said Thomas, in a light and careless manner, as if certain that his appeal would be successful ; “ nor need I attempt to tell how dearly and how long I will love you, for, in faith, I cannot. Will you make the discovery for yourself, by deciding in my favour ?”

Ellen looked up. There was a smile on her face ; an arch, mischievous, and happy smile, but it turned not on

Thomas. Her face turned to the contrary side, but yet the beam of that smile fell not on Francis, who stood in a state of as terrible suspense between hope and fear, as a Roman Catholic sinner at the gate of heaven, who has implored St Peter to open the gate, and awaits a final answer. The die of his fate was soon cast ; for Ellen, looking one way, yet moving another, straightway threw herself into Thomas Beattie’s arms, exclaiming, “ Ah, Tom ! I fear I am doing that which I shall rue, but I must trust to your generosity ; for, bad as you are, I like you the best !”

Thomas took her in his arms, and kissed her ; but before he could say a word in return, the despair and rage of his brother, breaking forth over every barrier of reason, interrupted him.

“ This is the trick of a coward, to screen himself from the chastisement he deserves. But you escape me not thus. Follow me, if you dare !” And as he said this, Francis rushed from the house, shaking his naked sword at his brother.

Ellen trembled with agitation at the young man’s rage ; and while Thomas still continued to assure her of his unalterable affection, Mrs Jane Jerdan entered, plucking her apron so as to make it twang like a bowstring.

“ What’s a’ this, Squire Tummas ? Are we to be habbled out o’ house and hadding by this outrageous young lawyer o’ yours ? By the souls o’ the Jerdans, I’ll kick up sic a stour about his lugs as shall blind the juridical een o’ him ! Its’ queer that men should study the law only to learn to break it. Sure am I, nae gentleman, that hasna been bred a lawyer, wad come into a neighbour’s house bullyragging that gate, wi’ sword in han’, malice pre pense in his eye, and venom on his tongue. Just as if a lassie hadna her ain freedom o’ choice, because a fool has been pleased to ask her ! Haud the grip you hae, niece Nell ; ye hae made a wise choice for

aince. Tam's the man for my money ! Folk are a' wise ahint the hand, but real wisdom lies taking time by the fore-lock. But, Squire Tam, the thing that I want to ken is this—Are you going to put up wi' a' that bullying and threatening, or do you propose to chastise the fool according to his folly?"

"In truth, Mrs Jane, I am very sorry for my brother's behaviour, and could not, with honour, yield any more than I did to pacify him. But he must be humbled. It would not do to suffer him to carry matters with so high a hand."

"Now, wad ye be but advised and leave him to me, I would play him sic a plisky as he shouldna forget till his dying day. By the souls o' the Jordans, I would ! Now, promise to me that ye winna fight him."

"O promise, promise !" cried Ellen, vehemently ; "for the sake of Heaven's love, promise my aunt that."

Thomas smiled and shook his head, as much as if he had said, " You do not know what you are asking." Mrs Jane went on.

"Do it then—do it with a vengeance ; and remember this, that wherever ye set the place o' combat, be it in hill or dale, deep linn or moss hag, I shall have a thirsman there to encourage you on. I shall give you a meeting you little wot o' !"

Thomas Beattie took all this for words of course, as Mrs Jane was well known for a raving, ranting old maid, whose vehemence few regarded, though a great many respected her for the care she had taken of her sister's family, and a greater number still regarded her with terror, as a being possessed of superhuman powers ; so after many expressions of the fondest love for Ellen, he took his leave, his mind being made up how it behoved him to deal with his brother.

I forgot to mention before, that old Beattie lived at Nether Cassway with

his family ; and his eldest son Thomas at Over Cassway, having, on his father's entering into a second marriage, been put in possession of that castle and these lands. Francis, of course, lived in his father's house when in Scotland ; and it was thus that his brother knew nothing of his frequent visits to Ellen Scott.

That night, as soon as Thomas went home, he despatched a note to his brother to the following purport : That he was sorry for the rudeness and unreasonableness of his behaviour. But if, on coming to himself, he was willing to make an apology before his mistress, then he (Thomas) would gladly extend to him the right hand of love and brotherhood ; but if he refused this, he would please to meet him on the Crook of Glendearg next morning by the sunrising. Francis returned for answer, that he would meet him at the time and place appointed. There was then no farther door of reconciliation left open, but Thomas still had hopes of managing him even on the combat field.

Francis slept little that night, being wholly set on revenge for the loss of his beloved mistress ; and a little after day-break he arose, and putting himself in light armour, proceeded to the place of rendezvous. He had farther to go than his elder brother, and on coming in sight of the Crook of Glendearg, he perceived the latter there before him. He was wrapt in his cavalier's cloak, and walking up and down the Crook with impassioned strides, on which Francis soliloquized as follows, as he hasted on :—" Ah, ha ! so Tom is here before me ! This is what I did not expect, for I did not think the flagitious dog had so much spirit or courage in him as to meet me. I am glad he has ! for how I long to chastise him, and draw some of the pampered blood from that vain and insolent heart, which has bereaved me of all I held dear on earth.

In this way did he cherish his wrath

till close at his brother's side, and then, addressing him in the same insolent terms, he desired him to cease his cowardly cogitations and draw. His opponent instantly wheeled about, threw off his horseman's cloak, and presented his sword ; and, behold, the young man's father stood before him, armed and ready for action ! The sword fell from Francis' hand, and he stood appalled, as if he had been a statue, unable either to utter a word or move a muscle.

"Take up thy sword, caitiff, and let it work thy ruthless work of vengeance here. Is it not better that thou shouldst pierce this old heart, worn out with care and sorrow, and chilled by the ingratitude of my race, than that of thy gallant and generous brother, the representative of our house, and the chief of our name ? Take up thy sword, I say, and if I do not chastise thee as thou deservest, may heaven rest the sword of justice from the hand of the avenger !"

"The God of heaven forbid that I should ever lift my sword against my honoured father !" said Francis.

"Thou darest not, thou traitor and coward !" returned the father. "I throw back the disgraceful terms in thy teeth which thou usedst to thy brother. Thou camest here boiling with rancour

to shed his blood ; and when I appear in person for him, thou darest not accept the challenge."

"You never did me wrong, my dear father ; but my brother has wronged me in the tenderest part."

"Thy brother never wronged thee intentionally, thou deceitful and sanguinary fratricide. It was thou alone who forced this quarrel upon him ; and I have great reason to suspect thee of a design to cut him off, that the inheritance and the maid might both be thine own. But here I swear by Him that made me, and the Redeemer that saved me, if thou wilt not go straight and kneel to thy brother for forgiveness, confessing thy injurious treatment, and swearing submission to thy natural chief, I will banish thee from my house and presence for ever, and load thee with a parent's curse."

The young scholar, being utterly astounded at his father's words, and at the awful and stern manner in which he addressed him, whom he had never before reprimanded, was wholly overcome. He kneeled to his parent, and implored his forgiveness, promising, with tears, to fulfil every injunction which it would please him to enjoin ; and on this understanding, the two parted on amicable and gracious terms.

CHAPTER II.

FRANCIS went straight to the tower of Over Cassway, and inquired for his brother, resolved to fulfil his father's stern injunctions to the very letter. He was informed his brother was in his chamber in bed, and indisposed. He asked the porter farther, if he had not been forth that day, and was answered, that he had gone forth early in the morning in armour, but had quickly returned, apparently in great agitation, and betaken himself to his bed. Francis then requested to be taken to his

brother, to which the servant instantly assented, and led him up to the chamber, never suspecting that there could be any animosity between the two only brothers ; but on John Burgess opening the door, and announcing the Tutor, Thomas, being in a nervous state, was a little alarmed. "Remain in the room there, Burgess," said he. "What, brother Frank, are you seeking here at this hour, armed cap-a-pie ? I hope you are not come to assassinate me in my bed ?"

"God forbid, brother," said the other ; "here John, take my sword down with you, I want some private conversation with Thomas." John did so, and the following conversation ensued ; for as soon as the door closed, Francis dropt on his knees, and said, "O, my dear brother, I have erred grievously, and am come to confess my crime, and implore your pardon."

"We have both erred, Francis, in suffering any earthly concern to incite us against each other's lives. We have both erred, but you have my forgiveness cheerfully ; here is my hand on it, and grant me thine in return. Oh, Francis, I have got an admonition this morning, that never will be erased from my memory, and which has caused me to see my life in a new light. What or whom think you I met an hour ago on my way to the Crook of Glendearg to encounter you ?"

"Our father, perhaps."

"You have seen him, then ?"

"Indeed I have, and he has given me such a reprimand for severity as son never before received from a parent."

"Brother Frank, I must tell you, and when I do, you will not believe me —It *was not* our father whom we both saw this morning."

"It was no other whom I saw. What do you mean ? Do you suppose that I do not know my own father ?"

"I tell you it was not, and could not be. I had an express from him yesterday. He is two hundred miles from this, and cannot be in Scotland sooner than three weeks hence."

"You astonish me, Thomas. This is beyond human comprehension."

"It is true—that I avouch, and the certainty of it has sickened me at heart. You must be aware that he came not home last night, and that his horse and retinue have not arrived."

"He was not at home, it is true, nor have his horse and retinue arrived in

Scotland. Still there is no denying that our father is here, and that it was he who spoke to and admonished me."

"I tell you it is impossible. A spirit has spoken to us in our father's likeness, for he is not, and cannot be, in Scotland at this time. My faculties are altogether confounded by the event, not being able to calculate on the qualities or condition of our monitor. An evil spirit it certainly could not be, for all its admonitions pointed to good. I sorely dread, Francis, that our father is no more : that there has been another engagement, that he has lost his life, and that his soul has been lingering around his family before taking its final leave of this sphere. I believe that our father is dead ; and for my part I am so sick at heart, that my nerves are all unstrung. Pray, do you take horse and post off for Salop, from whence his commission to me yesterday was dated, and see what hath happened to our revered father."

"I cannot, for my life, give credit to this, brother, or that it was any other being but my father himself who rebuked me. Pray allow me to tarry another day at least before I set out. Perhaps our father may appear in the neighbourhood, and may be concealing himself for some secret purpose. Did you tell him of our quarrel ?"

"No. He never asked me concerning it, but charged me sharply with my intent on the first word, and adjured me, by my regard for his blessing, and my hope of heaven, to desist from my purpose."

"Then he knew it all intuitively ; for when I first went in view of the spot appointed for our meeting, I perceived him walking sharply to and fro, wrapped in his military cloak. He never so much as deigned to look at me, till I came close to his side, and thinking it was yourself, I fell to upbraiding him, and desired him to draw. He then threw off his cloak, drew his

sword, and, telling me he came in your place, dared me to the encounter. But he knew all the grounds of our quarrel minutely, and laid the blame on me. I own I am a little puzzled to reconcile circumstances, but am convinced my father is near at hand. I heard his words, and saw his eyes flashing anger and indignation. Unfortunately, I did not touch him, which would have put an end to all doubts; for he did not present the hand of reconciliation to me, as I expected he would have done, on my yielding implicitly to all his injunctions."

The two brothers then parted, with protestations of mutual forbearance in all time coming, and with an understanding, as that was the morning of Saturday, that if their father, or some word of him, did not reach home before the next evening, the Tutor of Cassaway was to take horse for the county of Salop early on Monday morning.

Thomas, being thus once more left to himself, could do nothing but toss and tumble in his bed, and reflect on the extraordinary occurrence of that morning; and, after many troubled cogitations, it at length occurred to his recollection what Mrs Jane Jerdan had said to him:—"Do it, then. Do it with a vengeance!—But remember this, that wherever ye set the place of combat, be it in hill or dale, deep linn or moss hag, I shall have a thirdsman there to encourage you on. I shall give you a meeting you little wot of."

If he was confounded before, he was ten times more so at the remembrance of these words of most ominous import.

At the time he totally disregarded them, taking them for mere rhodomontade; but now the idea was to him terrible, that his father's spirit, like the prophet's of old, should have been conjured up by witchcraft; and then again he bethought himself that no witch would have employed her power to prevent evil. In the end he knew not

what to think, and so, taking the hammer from its rest, he gave three raps on the pipe drum (for there were no bells in the towers of those days), and up came John Burgess, Thomas Beattie's henchman, huntsman, and groom of the chambers, one who had been attached to the family for fifty years, and he says, in his slow west-border tongue, "How's thou now, callan'?—Is thou ony better-lins? There has been tway stags seen in the Bloodhope-Linns this morning already?"

"Ay, and there has been something else seen, John, that lies nearer to my heart to-day." John looked at his master with an inquisitive eye and quivering lip, but said nothing. The latter went on: "I am very unwell to-day, John, and cannot tell what is the matter with me. I think I am bewitched."

"It's very like thou is, callan'. I pits nae doubt on't at a'."

"Is there anybody in this moor district whom you ever heard blamed for the horrible crime of witchcraft?"

"Ay, that there is; mair than ane or tway. There's our neighbour, Lucky Jerdan, for instance, and her niece Nell,—the warst o' the pair, I doubt." John said this with a sly stupid leer, for he had admitted the old lady to an audience with his master the day before, and had eyed him afterwards bending his course towards Drumfielding.

"John, I am not disposed to jest at this time; for I am disturbed in mind, and very ill. Tell me, in reality, did you ever hear Mrs Jane Jerdan accused of being a witch?"

"Why, look thee, master, I dare nae say she's a witch; for Lucky has mony good points in her character. But it's weel kenned she has mair power nor her ain, for she can stop a' the plews in Eskdale wi' a wave o' her hand, and can raise the dead out o' their graves, just as a matter of coorse."

"That, John, is an extraordinary power indeed. But did you never hear of her sending any living men to their graves? For as that is rather the danger that hangs over me, I wish you would take a ride over and desire Mrs Jane to come and see me. Tell her I am ill, and request her to come and see me."

"I shall do that, callan'. But are thou sure it is the auld witch I'm to bring? For it strikes me the young ane maybe has done the deed; and if sae, she is the fittest to effect the cure. But I shall bring the auld ane.—Dinna flee intil a rage, for I shall bring the auld ane; though, gude forgie me! it is unco like bringing the houdie."

Away went John Burgess to Drumfielding; but Mrs Jane would not move for all his entreaties. She sent back word to his master, to "rise out o' his bed, for he wad be waur if ony thing ailed him; and if he had aught to say to auld Jane Jerdan, she would be ready to hear it at hame, though he behoved to remember that it wasna ilka subject under the sun that she could thole to be questioned anent."

With this answer John was forced to return, and there being no accounts of old Beattie having been seen in Scotland, the young men remained all the Sabbath-day in the utmost consternation at the apparition of their father they had seen, and the appalling rebuke they had received from it. The most incredulous mind could scarce doubt that they had had communion with a supernatural being; and not being able to draw any other conclusion themselves, they became persuaded that their father was dead; and accordingly, both prepared for setting out early on Monday morning toward the county of Salop, from whence they had last heard of him.

But just as they were ready to set out, when their spurs were buckled on and their horses bridled, Andrew Johnston,

their father's confidential servant, arrived from the place to which they were bound. He had ridden night and day, never once stinting the light gallop, as he said, and had changed his horse seven times. He appeared as if his ideas were in a state of derangement and confusion; and when he saw his young masters standing together, and ready-mounted for a journey, he stared at them as if he scarcely believed his own senses. They of course asked immediately about the cause of his express; but his answers were equivocal, and he appeared not to be able to assign any motive. They asked him concerning their father, and if anything extraordinary had happened to him. He would not say either that there had, or that there had not; but inquired, in his turn, if nothing extraordinary had happened with them at home. They looked to one another, and returned him no answer; but at length the youngest said, "Why, Andrew, you profess to have ridden express for the distance of two hundred miles; now you surely must have some guess for what purpose you have done this? Say, then, at once, what your message is: Is our father alive?"

"Ye—es; I think he is."

"*You think* he is? Are you uncertain, then?"

"I am certain he is not dead,—at least, was not when I left him. But—hum—certainly there has a change taken place. Hark ye, masters—can a man be said to be in life when he is out of himself?"

"Why, man, keep us not in this thrilling suspense. Is our father well?"

"No—not quite well. I am sorry to say, honest gentlemen, that he is not. But the truth is, my masters, now that I see you well and hearty, and about to take a journey in company, I begin to suspect that I have been posted all this way on a fool's errand; and not

another syllable will I speak on the subject, till I have some refreshment, and if you still insist on hearing a ridiculous story, you will hear it then."

When the matter of the refreshment had been got over to Andrew's full satisfaction, he began as follows :—

" Why, faith, you see, my masters, it is not easy to say my errand to you, for in fact I have none. Therefore, all that I can do is to tell you a story—a most ridiculous one it is, as ever sent a poor fellow out on the gallop for the matter of two hundred miles or so. On the morning before last, right early, little Isaac, the page, comes to me, and he says,—‘ Johnston, thou must go and visit master. He's bad.’"

" Bad ! " says I, " Whatever way is he bad ? "

" ‘ Why,’ says he, ‘ he's so far ill as he's not well, and desires to see you without one moment's delay. He's in fine taking, and that you'll find ; but what for do I stand here ? Lord, I never got such a fright. Why, Johnston, does thou know that master hath lost himself ? ’

" ‘ How lost himself, rabbit ? ’ says I ; ‘ speak plain out, else I'll have thee lug-hauled, thou dwarf ! ’ for my blood rose at the imp, for fooling at any mishap of my master's. But my choler only made him worse, for there is not a greater diel's-buckie in all the Five Dales.

" ‘ Why, man, it is true that I said,’ quoth he, laughing ; ‘ the old gurly squire hath lost himself ; and it will be grand sport to see thee going calling him at all the stane-crosses in the kingdom, in this here way.—Ho, yes ! and a two times ho, yes ! and a three times ho, yes ! Did anybody no see the better half of my master, Laird of the twa Cassway's, Bloodhope, and Pentland, which was amissing overnight, and is supposed to have gone a-wool-gathering ? If anybody hath seen that better part of my master, whilk

contains as much wit as a man could drive on a hurlbarrow, let them restore it to me, Andrew Johnston, piper, trumpeter, whacker, and wheedler, to the same great and noble squire ; and high shall be his reward. Ho, yes ! ’

" ‘ The deuce restore thee to thy right mind ! ’ said I, knocking him down, and leaving him sprawling in the kennel, and then hastened to my master, whom I found feverish, restless, and raving, and yet with an earnestness in his demeanour that stunned and terrified me. He seized my hand in both his, which were burning like fire, and gave me such a look of despair as I shall never forget. ‘ Johnston, I am ill,’ said he, ‘ grievously ill, and know not what is to become of me. Every nerve in my body is in a burning heat, and my soul is as it were torn to fritters with amazement. Johnston, as sure as you are in the body, something most deplorable hath happened to them.’

" ‘ Yes, as sure as I am in the body, there has, master,’ says I. ‘ But I'll have you bled and doctored in style, and you shall soon be as sound as a roach,’ says I, ‘ for a gentleman must not lose heart altogether for a little fire-raising in his outworks, if it does not reach the citadel,’ says I to him. But he cut me short by shaking his head and flinging my hand from him.

" ‘ A truce with your talking,’ says he. ‘ That which hath befallen me is as much above your comprehension as the sun is above the earth, and never will be comprehended by mortal man ; but I must inform you of it, as I have no other means of gaining the intelligence I yearn for, and which I am incapable of gaining personally. Johnston, there never was a mortal man suffered what I have suffered since midnight. I believe I have had doings with hell ; for I have been disembodied, and embodied again, and the intensity of my tortures has been unparalleled.—I was at home this morning at daybreak.’

"At home at Cassway ! says I. 'I am sorry to hear you say so, master, because you know, or should know, that the thing is impossible, you being in the ancient town of Shrewsbury on the king's business.'

"I was at home in very deed, Andrew,' returned he ; 'but whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell—the Lord only knoweth. But there I was in this guise, and with this heart and all its feelings within me, where I saw scenes, heard words, and spoke others, which I will here relate to you. I had finished my despatches last night by midnight, and was sitting musing on the hard fate and improvidence of my sovereign master, when, ere ever I was aware, a neighbour of ours, Mrs Jane Jerdan, of Drumfielding, a mysterious character, with whom I have had some strange doings in my time, came suddenly into the chamber, and stood before me. I accosted her with doubt and terror, asking what had brought her so far from home.'

"You are not so far from home as you imagine,' said she ; 'and it is fortunate for some that it is so. Your two sons have quarrelled about the possession of niece Ellen, and though the eldest is blameless of the quarrel, yet has he been forced into it, and they are engaged to fight at daybreak at the Crook of Glendale. There they will assuredly fall by each other's hands, if you interpose not ; for there is no other authority now on earth that can prevent this woful calamity.'

"Alas ! how can I interfere,' said I, 'at a distance ? It is already within a few hours of the meeting, and before I get from among the windings of the Severn, their swords will be bathed in each other's blood ! I must trust to the interference of Heaven.'

"Is your name and influence, then, to perish for ever?' said she. 'Is it so soon to follow your master's, the great Maxwell of the Dales, into utter ob-

livion ? Why not rather rouse into requisition the energies of the spirits that watch over human destinies ? At least step aside with me, that I may disclose the scene to your eyes. You know I can do it ; and you may then act according to your natural impulse.'

"Such was the import of the words she spoke to me, if not the very words themselves. I understood them not at the time ; nor do I yet. But when she had done speaking, she took me by the hand, and hurried me towards the door of the apartment, which she opened, and the first step we took over the threshold, we stepped into a void space and fell downward. I was going to call out, but felt my descent so rapid, that my voice was stifled, and I could not so much as draw my breath. I expected every moment to fall against something, and be dashed to pieces ; and I shut my eyes, clenched my teeth, and held by the dame's hand with a frenzied grasp, in expectation of the catastrophe. But down we went—down and down, with a celerity which tongue cannot describe, without light, breath, or any sort of impediment. I now felt assured that we had both at once stepped from off the earth, and were hurled into the immeasurable void. The airs of darkness sung in my ears with a booming din as I rolled down the steeps of everlasting night, an outcast from nature and all its harmonies, and a journeyer into the depths of hell.

"I still held my companion's hand, and felt the pressure of hers ; and so long did this our alarming descent continue, that I at length caught myself breathing once more, but as quick as if I had been in the height of a fever. I then tried every effort to speak, but they were all unavailing ; for I could not emit one sound, although my lips and tongue fashioned the words. Think, then, of my astonishment, when my companion sung out the following stanza with the greatest glee :—

' Here we roll,
Body and soul,
Down to the deeps of the Paynim's goal—
With speed and with spell,
With yo and with yell,
This is the way to the palace of hell—
Sing yo ! ho !
Level and low,
Down to the Valley of Vision we go !'

" ' Ha, ha, ha ! Tam Beattie,' added she, ' where is a' your courage now ? Cannot ye lift up your voice and sing a stave wi' your auld crony ? And cannot ye lift up your een, and see what region you are in now ? '

" I did force open my eyelids, and beheld light, and apparently worlds, or huge lurid substances, gliding by me with speed beyond that of the lightning of heaven. I certainly perceived light, though of a dim, uncertain nature ; but so precipitate was my descent, I could not distinguish from whence it proceeded, or of what it consisted, whether of the vapours of chaotic wastes, or the streamers of hell. So I again shut my eyes closer than ever, and waited the event in terror unutterable.

" We at length came upon something which interrupted our farther progress. I had no feeling as we fell against it, but merely as if we came in contact with some soft substance that impeded our descent ; and immediately afterwards I perceived that our motion had ceased.

" ' What a terrible tumble we hae gotten, Laird ! ' said my companion. ' But ye are now in the place where you should be ; and deil speed the coward ! '

" So saying, she quitted my hand, and I felt as if she were wrested from me by a third object ; but still I durst not open my eyes, being convinced that I was lying in the depths of hell, or some hideous place not to be dreamt of ; so I lay still in despair, not even daring to address a prayer to my Maker. At length I lifted my eyes slowly and fearfully ; but they had no power of dis-

tinguishing objects. All that I perceived was a vision of something in nature, with which I had in life been too well acquainted. It was a glimpse of green glens, long withdrawing ridges, and one high hill, with a cairn on its summit. I rubbed my eyes to divest them of the enchantment, but when I opened them again, the illusion was still brighter and more magnificent. Then springing to my feet, I perceived that I was lying in a little fairy ring, not one hundred yards from the door of my own hall !

" I was, as you may well conceive, dazzled with admiration ; still I felt that something was not right with me, and that I was struggling with an enchantment ; but recollecting the hideous story told me by the beldame, of the deadly discord between my two sons, I hasted to watch their motions, for the morning was yet but dawning. In a few seconds after recovering my senses, I perceived my eldest son Thomas leave his tower armed, and pass on towards the place of appointment. I waylaid him, and remarked to him that he was very early astir, and I feared on no good intent. He made no answer, but stood like one in a stupor, and gazed at me. ' I know your purpose, son Thomas,' said I ; ' so it is in vain for you to equivocate. You have challenged your brother, and are going to meet him in deadly combat ; but as you value your father's blessing, and would deprecate his curse —as you value your hope of heaven, and would escape the punishment of hell—abandon the hideous and cursed intent, and be reconciled to your only brother.'

" On this, my dutiful son Thomas kneeled to me, and presented his sword, disclaiming at the same time all intentions of taking away his brother's life, and all animosity for the vengeance sought against himself, and thanked me in a flood of tears for my interference. I then commanded him back to his

couch, and taking his cloak and sword, hastened away to the Crook of Glen-dearg, to wait the arrival of his brother."

Here Andrew Johnston's narrative detailed the selfsame circumstances recorded in a former part of this tale, as having passed between the father and his younger son, so that it is needless to recapitulate them ; but beginning where that broke off, he added, in the words of the old laird : "As soon as my son Francis had left me, in order to be reconciled to his brother, I returned to the fairy knowe and ring, where I first found myself seated at daybreak. I know not why I went there, for though I considered with myself, I could discover no motive that I had for doing so, but was led thither by a sort of impulse which I could not resist, and from the same feeling spread my son's mantle on the spot, laid his sword beside it, and stretched me down to sleep. I remember nothing farther with any degree of accuracy, for I instantly fell into a chaos of suffering, confusion, and racking dismay, from which I was only of late released by awaking from a trance on the very seat, and in the same guise in which I was the evening before. I am certain I was at home in body or in spirit—saw my sons—spake these words to them, and heard theirs in return. How I returned I know even less, if that is possible, than how I went ; for it seemed to me that the mysterious force that presses us to this sphere, and supports us on it, was in my case withdrawn or subverted, and that I merely fell from one part of the earth's surface and alighted on another. Now I am so ill that I cannot move from this couch ; therefore, Andrew, do you mount and ride straight home. Spare no horse-flesh, by night or by day, to bring me word of my family, for I dread that some evil hath befallen them. If you find them in life, give them many charges from me of brotherly love and affection ;

if not—what can I say, but, in the words of the patriarch, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

The two brothers, in utter amazement, went together to the green ring on the top of the knoll above the castle of Cassway, and there found the mantle lying spread, and the sword beside it. They then, without letting Johnston into the awful secret, mounted straight, and rode off with him to their father. They found him still in bed, and very ill ; and though rejoiced at seeing them, they soon lost hope of his recovery, his spirits being broken and deranged in a wonderful manner. Their conversations together were of the most solemn nature, the visitation deigned to them having been above their capacity. On the third or fourth day, their father was removed by death from this terrestrial scene, and the minds of the young men were so much impressed by the whole of the circumstances, that it made a great alteration in their after life. Thomas, as solemnly charged by his father, married Ellen Scott, and Francis was well known afterwards as the celebrated Dr Beattie of Amherst. Ellen was mother to twelve sons ; and on the night that her seventh son was born, her aunt Jerdan was lost, and never more heard of, either living or dead.*

* This will be viewed as a most romantic and unnatural story, as without doubt it is ; but I have the strongest reasons for believing that it is founded on a literal fact, of which all the three were sensibly and positively convinced. It was published in England in Dr Beattie's lifetime, and by his acquiescence, and owing to the respectable source from whence it came, it was never disputed in that day that it had its origin in truth. It was again republished, with some miserable alterations, in a London collection of 1770, by J. Smith, at No. 15, Paternoster Row, and though I have seen none of these accounts, but relate the story wholly from tradition, yet the assurance obtained from a friend of their existence, is a curious corroborative circumstance, and proves that if the story was not true, the parties at least believed it to be so.—*Note by the Author.*

THE ELDER'S FUNERAL.

BY PROFESSOR WILSON.

How beautiful to the eye and to the heart rise up, in a pastoral region, the green silent hills from the dissolving snow-wreaths that yet linger at their feet ! A few warm sunny days, and a few breezy and melting nights, have seemed to create the sweet season of spring out of the winter's bleakest desolation. We can scarcely believe that such brightness of verdure could have been shrouded in the snow, blending itself, as it now does, so vividly with the deep blue of heaven. With the revival of nature our own souls feel restored. Happiness becomes milder, meeker, and richer in pensive thought ; while sorrow catches a faint tinge of joy, and reposes itself on the quietness of earth's opening breast. Then is youth rejoicing — manhood sedate — and old age resigned. The child shakes his golden curls in his glee ; he of riper life hails the coming year with temperate exultation ; and the eye that has been touched with dimness, in the general spirit of delight, forgets or fears not the shadows of the grave.

On such a vernal day as this did we, who had visited the Elder on his death-bed,* walk together to his house in the Hazel Glen, to accompany his body to the place of burial. On the night he died, it seemed to be the dead of winter. On the day he was buried, it seemed to be the birth of spring. The old pastor and I were alone for awhile as we pursued our path up the glen, by the banks of the little burn. It had cleared itself off from the melted snow, and ran so pellucid a race that every stone and pebble was visible in its yellow channel. The willows, the alders, and the birches, the fairest and the earliest of our native hill-trees,

seemed almost tinged with a verdant light, as if they were budding ; and beneath them, here and there peeped out, as in the pleasure of new existence, the primrose lonely, or in little families and flocks. The bee had not yet ventured to leave his cell, yet the flowers reminded one of his murmur. A few insects were dancing in the air, and here and there some little moorland bird, touched at the heart with the warm and sunny change, was piping his love-sweet song among the braes. It was just such a day as a grave meditative man, like him we were about to inter, would have chosen to walk over his farm in religious contentment with his lot. That was the thought that entered the pastor's heart, as we paused to enjoy one brighter gleam of the sun in a little meadow-field of peculiar beauty.

"This is the last day of the week, and on that day often did the Elder walk through this little happy kingdom of his own, with some of his grandchildren beside and around him, and often his Bible in his hand. It is, you feel, a solitary place,—all the vale is one seclusion—and often have its quiet bounds been a place of undisturbed meditation and prayer."

We now came in sight of the cottage, and beyond it the termination of the glen. There the high hills came sloping gently down ; and a little waterfall, in the distance, gave animation to a scene of perfect repose. We were now joined by various small parties coming to the funeral through openings among the hills ; all sedate, but none sad, and every greeting was that of kindness and peace. The Elder had died full of years ; and there was no need why any out of his household should weep. A long life of piety had been beautifully closed ;

* See *ante*, page 280.

and, therefore, we were all going to commit the body to the earth, assured, as far as human beings may be so assured, that the soul was in heaven. As the party increased on our approach to the house, there was even cheerfulness among us. We spoke of the early and bright promise of spring—of the sorrows and joys of other families—of marriages and births—of the new schoolmaster—of to-morrow's Sabbath. There was no topic of which, on any common occasion, it might have been fitting to speak, that did not now perhaps occupy, for a few moments, some one or other of the group, till we found ourselves ascending the greensward before the cottage, and stood below the bare branches of the sycamores. Then we were all silent, and, after a short pause, reverently entered into the house of death.

At the door the son received us with a calm, humble, and untroubled face ; and in his manner towards the old minister, there was something that could not be misunderstood, expressing penitence, gratitude, and resignation. We all sat down in the large kitchen ; and the son decently received each person at the door, and showed him to his place. There were some old gray heads, more becoming gray, and many bright in manhood and youth. But the same solemn hush was over them all, and they sat all bound together in one uniting and assimilating spirit of devotion and faith. Wine and bread were to be sent round ; but the son looked to the old minister, who rose, lifted up his withered hand, and began a blessing and a prayer.

There was so much composure and stillness in the old man's attitude, and something so affecting in his voice, tremulous and broken, not in grief but age, that no sooner had he begun to pray, than every heart and every breath at once were hushed. All stood motionless, nor could

one eye abstain from that placid and patriarchal countenance, with its closed eyes, and long silvery hair. There was nothing sad in his words, but they were all humble and solemn, and at times even joyful in the kindling spirit of piety and faith. He spoke of the dead man's goodness as imperfect in the eyes of his Great Judge, but such as, we were taught, might lead, through intercession, to the kingdom of heaven. Might the blessing of God, he prayed, which had so long rested on the head now coffined, not forsake that of him who was now to be the father of this house. There was more—more joy, we were told, in heaven, over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance. Fervently, too, and tenderly, did the old man pray for her, in her silent chamber, who had lost so kind a parent, and for all the little children round her knees. Nor did he end his prayer without some allusion to his own gray hairs, and to the approaching day on which many then present would attend his burial.

Just as he ceased to speak, one solitary stifled sob was heard, and all eyes turned kindly round to a little boy who was standing by the side of the Elder's son. Restored once more to his own father's love, his heart had been insensibly filled with peace since the old man's death. The returning tenderness of the living came in place of that of the dead, and the child yearned towards his father now with a stronger affection, relieved at last from all his fear. He had been suffered to sit an hour each day beside the bed on which his grandfather lay shrouded, and he had got reconciled to the cold but silent and happy looks of death. His mother and his Bible told him to obey God without repining in all things ; and the child did so with perfect simplicity. One sob had found its way at the close of that pathetic prayer ; but

the tears that bathed his glistening cheeks were far different from those that, on the day and night of his grandfather's decease, had burst from the agony of a breaking heart. The old minister laid his hand silently upon his golden head ; there was a momentary murmur of kindness and pity over the room ; the child was pacified, and again all was repose and peace.

A sober voice said all was ready, and the son and the minister led the way reverently out into the open air. The bier stood before the door, and was lifted slowly up with its sable pall. Silently each mourner took his place. The sun was shining pleasantly, and a gentle breeze, passing through the sycamore, shook down the glittering rain-drops upon the funeral velvet. The small procession, with an instinctive spirit, began to move along ; and as I cast up my eyes to take a farewell look of that beautiful dwelling, now finally left by him who so long had blessed it, I saw at the half-open lattice of the little bedroom window above, the pale weeping face of that stainless matron, who was taking her last passionate farewell of the mortal remains of her father, now slowly receding from her to the quiet field of graves.

We proceeded along the edges of the hills, and along the meadow-fields, crossed the old wooden bridge over the burn, now widening in its course to the plain, and in an hour of pensive silence, or pleasant talk, we found ourselves entering, in a closer body, the little gateway of the churchyard. To the tolling of the bell we moved across the green mounds, and arranged ourselves, according to the plan and order which our feelings suggested, around the bier and its natural supporters. There was no delay. In a few minutes the Elder was laid among the mould of his forefathers, in their long-ago chosen spot of rest. One by one the people dropped away, and none were left by the new made

grave but the son and his little boy, the pastor and myself. As yet nothing was said, and in that pause I looked around me, over the sweet burial-ground.

Each tombstone and grave over which I had often walked in boyhood arose in my memory, as I looked steadfastly upon their long-forgotten inscriptions ; and many had then been erected. The whole character of the place was still simple and unostentatious, but from the abodes of the dead I could see that there had been an improvement in the condition of the living. There was a taste visible in their decorations, not without much of native feeling, and occasionally something even of native grace. If there was any other inscription than the name and age of the poor inhabitants below, it was, in general, some short text of Scripture ; for it is most pleasant and soothing to the pious mind, when bereaved of friends, to commemorate them on earth by some touching expression taken from that Book which reveals to them a life in heaven.

There is a sort of gradation, a scale of forgetfulness, in a country churchyard, where the processes of nature are suffered to go on over the green place of burial, that is extremely affecting in the contemplation. The soul goes from the grave just covered up, to that which seems scarcely joined together, on and on to those folded and bound by the undisturbed verdure of many, many unremembered years. It then glides at last into nooks and corners where the ground seems perfectly calm and waveless, utter oblivion having smoothed the earth over the long mouldered bones. Tombstones, on which the inscriptions are hidden in green obliteration, or that are mouldering, or falling to a side, are close to others which last week were brushed by the chisel ;—constant renovation and constant decay—vain attempts to adhere to memory—and oblivion, now baffled and now trium-

phant, smiling among all the memorials of human affection, as they keep continually crumbling away into the world of undistinguishable dust and ashes.

The churchyard, to the inhabitants of a rural parish, is the place to which, as they grow older, all their thoughts and feelings turn. The young take a look of it every Sabbath-day, not always perhaps a careless look, but carry away from it, unconsciously, many salutary impressions. What is more pleasant than the meeting of a rural congregation in the churchyard before the minister appears? What is there to shudder at in lying down, sooner or later, in such a peaceful and sacred place, to be spoken of frequently on Sabbath among the groups of which we used to be one, and our low burial-spot to be visited, at such times, as long as there remains on earth any one to whom our face was dear? To those who mix in the strife and dangers of the world, the place is felt to be uncertain wherein they may finally lie at rest. The soldier—the sailor—the traveller—can only see some dim grave dug for him when he dies, in some place obscure, nameless, and unfixed to the imagination. All he feels is, that his burial will be—on earth—or in the sea. But the peaceful dwellers who cultivate their paternal acres, or tilling at least the same small spot of soil, shift only from a cottage on the hillside to one on the plain, still within the bounds of one quiet parish; they look to lay their bones at last in the burial-place of the kirk in which they were baptised, and with them it almost literally is but a step from the cradle to the grave.

Such were the thoughts that calmly followed each other in my reverie, as I stood beside the Elder's grave, and the trodden grass was again lifting up its blades from the pressure of many feet, now all, but a few, departed. What a simple burial had it been! Dust was consigned to dust—no more. Bare, naked, simple, and austere is in Scot-

land the service of the grave. It is left to the soul itself to consecrate, by its passion, the mould over which tears, but no words, are poured. Surely there is a beauty in this; for the heart is left unto its own sorrow—according as it is a friend—a brother—a parent—or a child, that is covered up from our eyes. Yet call not other rites, however different from this, less beautiful or pathetic. For willingly does the soul connect its grief with any consecrated ritual of the dead. Sound or silence—music—hymns—psalms—sable garments, or raiment white as snow—all become holy symbols of the soul's affection; nor is it for any man to say which is the most natural, which is the best, of the thousand shows and expressions, and testimonies of sorrow, resignation, and love, by which mortal beings would seek to express their souls when one of their brethren has returned to his parent dust.

My mind was recalled from all these sad, yet not unpleasant fancies, by a deep groan, and I beheld the Elder's son fling himself down upon the grave and kiss it passionately, imploring pardon from God. "I distressed my father's heart in his old age—I repented—and received thy forgiveness even on thy death-bed!" The old minister stood at the head of the grave without speaking a word, with his solemn and pitiful eyes fixed upon the prostrate and contrite man. His sin had been great, and tears that till now had, on this day at least, been compressed within his heart by the presence of so many of his friends, now poured down upon the sod as if they would have found their way to the very body of his father. Neither of us offered to lift him up, for we felt awed by the rueful passion of his love, his remorse, and his penitence; and nature, we felt, ought to have her way. "Fear not, my

son," at length said the old man, in a gentle voice—"fear not, my son, but that you are already forgiven. Dost thou not feel pardon within thy contrite spirit?" He rose up from his knees with a faint smile, while the minister, with his white head yet uncovered, held his hands over him as in benediction;

and that beautiful and loving child, who had been standing in a fit of weeping terror at his father's agony, now came up to him and kissed his cheek—holding in his little hand a few faded primroses which he had unconsciously gathered together as they lay on the turf of his grandfather's grave.

MACDONALD, THE CATTLE-RIEVER.

ARCHIBALD MACDONALD was perhaps the most perfect master of his hazardous profession of any who ever practised it. Archibald was by birth a gentleman, and proprietor of a small estate in Argyleshire, which he however lost early in life. He soon distinguished himself as a cattle-lifter on an extensive scale; and weak as the arm of the law might then have been, he found it advisable to remove further from its influence, and he shifted his residence from his native district of Appin to the remote peninsula of Ardnamurchan, which was admirably adapted to his purpose, from its geographical position. He obtained a lease of an extensive farm, and he fitted up a large cowhouse, though his whole visible live-stock consisted of one filly. His neighbours could not help making remarks on this subject, but he begged of them to have no anxiety on that head, assuring them that his byre would be full ere Christmas; and he was as good as his word. He had trained the filly to suit his purpose, and it was a practice of his to tie other horses to her tail; she then directed her course homeward by unfrequented routes, and always found her way in safety.

His expeditions were generally carried on by sea, and he annoyed the most distant of the Hebrides, both to the south and north. He often

changed the colour of his boats and sails, and adopted whatever appeared best suited to his immediate purpose. In consequence of this artifice, his depredations were frequently ascribed to others, and sometimes to men of the first distinction in that country, so dexterously did he imitate their birlings and their insignia. He held his land from Campbell of Lochnell, into whose favour he had insinuated himself by his knowledge and address.

When Lochnell resided at the castle of Mingary, Archibald was often ordered to lie on a mattress in his bed-room, to entertain him at night with the recitation of the poems of Ossian, and with tales. Archibald contrived means to convert this circumstance to his advantage. He ordered his men to be in readiness, and that night he selected one of his longest poems. As he calculated, Lochnell fell asleep before he had finished the recital; the robber slunk out and soon joined his associates. He steered for the island of Mull, where some of his men had been previously sent to execute his orders; he carried off a whole fold of cattle, which he landed safely, and returned to his mattress before Lochnell awoke. When he lay down he purposely snored so loudly that the sleeping chief was disturbed, and complained of the tremendous noise the fellow made, observing that, fond as he

was of poetry, he must deprive himself of it in future on such conditions. To this Archibald had no objections ; his principal object was then accomplished, and taking up the tale where he had stopped when his patron fell asleep, he finished it, and slept soundly to an advanced hour.

The cattle were immediately missed, and suspicion fell on Archibald ; but he triumphantly referred to Lochnell for a proof of his innocence, and this he obtained. That gentleman solemnly declared that the robber had never been out of his room during that night, and the charge was of course dropped.

A wealthy man who resided in the neighbourhood was noted for his penurious habits, and he had incurred particular odium by refusing a supply of meal to a poor widow in distress. This man had sent a considerable quantity of grain to the mill, which, as usual, he attended himself, and was conveying the meal home at night on horseback. The horses were tied in a string, the halter of one fixed to the tail of another ; and the owner led the foremost by a long tether. His road lay through a wood, and Archibald there watched his approach. The night was dark, and the man walked slowly, humming a song ; the ground was soft, and the horses having no shoes (as is still usual in that country), their tread made no noise. Archibald ordered one of his men to loosen the tether from the head of the front horse, and to hold it, himself occupying the place of the horse, and walking on at the same pace. He thus got possession of the whole. The miser soon arrived at his own door, and called for assistance to deposit his winter store in safety, but, to his astonishment, found he had but the halter !

Availing himself of the credulity of his countrymen, he pretended to hold frequent intercourse with a spirit or genii, still much distinguished in the West Highlands under the appellation

of Glastig. This he turned to excellent account, as the stories which his partisans fabricated of the command he had over the Glastig, and the connexion between them, terrified the people so much, that few could be prevailed upon to watch their cattle at night, and they thus fell an easy prey to this artful rogue.

Archibald's father having died early, his mother afterwards married a second husband, who resided in a neighbouring island. When she died, her son was out of favour with his stepfather, and he was refused the privilege of having the disposal of his mother's remains, nor did he think it prudent to appear openly at her funeral. He however obtained accurate information of the place where the corpse was lying. One dark night, he made an opening in the thatched roof of the earthen hut, and the wakers being occupied in the feats of athletic exercise usually practised on these occasions, the body being excluded from their sight by a screen which hung across the house, Archibald carried it off to his boat like another Æneas. He also got possession of the stock of whisky intended for the occasion, as it lay in the same place—thus discharging the last duties of a pious son with little expense to himself.

A fatal event at length occurred, which rendered it necessary for the man to retire from trade. He made a descent on one of the small islands on that coast, and had collected the cattle, when the proprietor (who had information of the circumstance), made his appearance to rescue them. Archibald was compelled to yield up his prey, but one of the villains who accompanied him levelled his musket at the gentleman, and shot him dead from the boat.

The robber was fully aware of his danger, and, with the assistance of a fair wind, he shaped his course for the mainland. He pushed on with all possible speed, and arrived at Inveraray

before sunrise the following morning. Having information that Stewart of Appin was then in town, he watched his motions, and at an early hour saw him on the street in conversation with the sheriff of the county. Archibald, who was an old acquaintance, saluted him, and his salute was returned. When Appin parted with the sheriff, Archibald complained that he had taken no notice of him the preceding day, when he accosted him in the same place. Appin said he was conscious of having seen him, but that he was much hurried at the time, and hoped he would excuse him. The robber's object was accom-

plished. Appin had no doubt of the truth of what he said ; and on his trial for the murder, an alibi was established in his favour, from this very extraordinary piece of address. Some of his crew were afterwards taken in Ross-shire, and executed there by order of the Earl of Seaforth, though the actual murderer escaped punishment. Archibald, however, never again plundered on a large scale. He died about the middle of the 17th century, and his name still stands unrivalled for cunning and address in his calling.—“*Traditions of the Western Highlands*,” in the *London Literary Gazette*.

THE MURDER HOLE:

AN ANCIENT LEGEND OF GALLOWAY.

Ah, frantic Fear !
I see, I see thee near ;
I know thy hurried step, thy haggard eye !
Like thee I start, like thee disordered fly !

Collins.

IN a remote district of country belonging to Lord Cassilis, between Ayrshire and Galloway, about three hundred years ago, a moor of apparently boundless extent stretched several miles along the road, and wearied the eye of the traveller by the sameness and desolation of its appearance : not a tree varied the prospect—not a shrub enlivened the eye by its freshness—not a native flower bloomed to adorn this ungenial soil. One “lonesome desert” reached the horizon on every side, with nothing to mark that any mortal had ever visited the scene before, except a few rude huts that were scattered near its centre ; and a road, or rather pathway, for those whom business or necessity obliged to pass in that direction. At length, deserted as this wild region had always

been, it became still more gloomy. Strange rumours arose that the path of unwearied travellers had been beset on this “blasted heath,” and that treachery and murder had intercepted the solitary stranger as he traversed its dreary extent. When several persons, who were known to have passed that way, mysteriously disappeared, the inquiries of their relatives led to a strict and anxious investigation ; but though the officers of justice were sent to scour the country, and examine the inhabitants, not a trace could be obtained of the persons in question, nor of any place of concealment which could be a refuge for the lawless or desperate to horde in. Yet as inquiry became stricter, and the disappearance of individuals more frequent, the simple inhabitants of the neigh-

bouring hamlet were agitated by the most fearful apprehensions. Some declared that the death-like stillness of the night was often interrupted by sudden and preternatural cries of more than mortal anguish, which seemed to arise in the distance ; and a shepherd one evening, who had lost his way on the moor, declared he had approached three mysterious figures, who seemed struggling against each other with supernatural energy, till at length one of them, with a frightful scream, suddenly sunk into the earth.

Gradually the inhabitants deserted their dwellings on the heath, and settled in distant quarters, till at length but one of the cottages continued to be inhabited by an old woman and her two sons, who loudly lamented that poverty chained them to this solitary and mysterious spot. Travellers who frequented this road now generally did so in groups to protect each other ; and if night overtook them, they usually stopped at the humble cottage of the old woman and her sons, where cleanliness compensated for the want of luxury, and where, over a blazing fire of peat, the bolder spirits smiled at the imaginary dangers of the road, and the more timid trembled as they listened to the tales of terror and affright with which their hosts entertained them.

One gloomy and tempestuous night in November, a pedlar-boy hastily traversed the moor. Terrified to find himself involved in darkness amidst its boundless wastes, a thousand frightful traditions, connected with this dreary scene, darted across his mind : every blast, as it swept in hollow gusts over the heath, seemed to teem with the sights of departed spirits ; and the birds, as they winged their way above his head, appeared, with loud and shrill cries, to warn him of approaching danger. The whistle, with which he usually beguiled his weary pilgrimage, died away into silence, and he groped

along with trembling and uncertain steps, which sounded too loudly in his ears. The promise of Scripture occurred to his memory, and revived his courage : “ I will be unto thee as a rock in the desert, and as an hiding-place in the storm.” “ Surely,” thought he, “ though alone, I am not forsaken ;” and a prayer for assistance hovered on his lips.

A light now glimmered in the distance which would lead him, he conjectured, to the cottage of the old woman ; and towards that he eagerly bent his way, remembering, as he hastened along, that when he had visited it the year before, it was in company of a large party of travellers, who had beguiled the evening with those tales of mystery which had so lately filled his brain with images of terror. He recollects, too, how anxiously the old woman and her sons had endeavoured to detain him when the other travellers were departing ; and now, therefore, he confidently anticipated a cordial and cheering reception. His first call for admission obtained no visible marks of attention, but instantly the greatest noise and confusion prevailed within the cottage. “ They think it is one of the supernatural visitants of whom the old lady talks so much,” thought the boy, approaching a window, where the light within showed him all the inhabitants at their several occupations ; the old woman was hastily scrubbing the stone floor, and strewing it thickly with sand, while her two sons seemed, with equal haste, to be thrusting something large and heavy into an immense chest, which they carefully locked.

The boy, in a frolicsome mood, thoughtlessly tapped at the window, when they all instantly started up with consternation so strongly depicted on their countenances, that he shrank back involuntarily with an undefined feeling of apprehension ; but before he had time to reflect a moment longer,

one of the men suddenly darted out at the door, and seizing the boy roughly by the shoulder, dragged him violently into the cottage.

"I am not what you take me for," said the boy, attempting to laugh; "but only the poor pedlar who visited you last year."

"Are you *alone?*" inquired the old woman, in a harsh, deep tone, which made his heart thrill with apprehension.

"Yes," said the boy, "I am alone *here*; and alas!" he added with a burst of uncontrollable feeling, "I am alone in the wide world also! Not a person exists who would assist me in distress, or shed a single tear if I died this very night."

"Then you are welcome!" said one of the men with a sneer, while he cast a glance of peculiar expression at the other inhabitants of the cottage.

It was with a shiver of apprehension, rather than of cold, that the boy drew towards the fire, and the looks which the old woman and her sons exchanged made him wish that he had preferred the shelter of any one of the roofless cottages which were scattered near, rather than thrust himself among persons of such dubious aspect. Dreadful surmises flitted across his brain; and terrors which he could neither combat nor examine imperceptibly stole into his mind; but alone, and beyond the reach of assistance, he resolved to smother his suspicions, or at least not increase the danger by revealing them. The room to which he retired for the night had a confused and desolate aspect: the curtains seemed to have been violently torn down from the bed, and still hung in tatters around it; the table seemed to have been broken by some violent concussion, and the fragments of various pieces of furniture lay scattered upon the floor. The boy begged that a light might burn in his apartment till he was asleep, and

anxiously examined the fastenings of the door; but they seemed to have been wrenched asunder on a former occasion, and were still left rusty and broken.

It was long ere the pedlar attempted to compose his agitated nerves to rest, but at length his senses began to, "steep themselves in forgetfulness," though his imagination remained painfully active, and presented new scenes of terror to his mind, with all the vividness of reality. He fancied himself again wandering on the heath, which appeared to be peopled with spectres, who all beckoned to him not to enter the cottage, and as he approached it, they vanished with a hollow and despairing cry. The scene then changed, and he found himself again seated by the fire, where the countenances of the men scowled upon him with the most terrifying malignity, and he thought the old woman suddenly seized him by the arms, and pinioned them to his side.

Suddenly the boy was startled from these agitated slumbers, by what sounded to him like a cry of distress; he was broad awake in a moment, and sat up in bed; but the noise was not repeated, and he endeavoured to persuade himself it had only been a continuation of the fearful images which had disturbed his rest, when, on glancing at the door, he observed underneath it a broad red stream of blood silently stealing its course along the floor. frantic with alarm, it was but the work of a moment to spring from his bed, and rush to the door, through a chink of which, his eye nearly dimmed with affright, he could watch unsuspected whatever might be done in the adjoining room.

His fear vanished instantly when he perceived that it was only a goat that they had been slaughtering; and he was about to steal into his bed again, ashamed of his groundless apprehensions, when his ear was arrested by a conversation which transfixes him agast with terror to the spot.

"This is an easier job than you had yesterday," said the man who held the goat. "I wish all the throats we've cut were as easily and quietly done. Did you ever hear such a noise as the old gentleman made last night? It was well we had no neighbours within a dozen miles, or they must have heard his cries for help and mercy."

"Don't speak of it," replied the other; "I was never fond of bloodshed."

"Ha! ha!" said the other, with a sneer, "you say so, do you?"

"I do," answered the first, gloomily; "the Murder Hole is the thing for me—that tells no tales; a single scuffle,—a single plunge,—and the fellow's dead and buried to your hand in a moment. I would defy all the officers in Christendom to discover any mischief there."

"Ay, Nature did us a good turn when she contrived such a place as that. Who that saw a hole in the heath, filled with clear water, and so small that the long grass meets over the top of it, would suppose that the depth is unfathomable, and that it conceals more than forty people, who have met their deaths there? It sucks them in like a leech!"

"How do you mean to despatch the lad in the next room?" asked the old woman in an undertone. The elder son made her a sign to be silent, and pointed towards the door where their trembling auditor was concealed; while the other, with an expression of brutal ferocity, passed his bloody knife across his throat.

The pedlar boy possessed a bold and daring spirit, which was now roused to desperation; but in any open resistance the odds were so completely against him that flight seemed his best resource. He gently stole to the window, and having forced back the rusty bolt by which the casement had been fastened, he let himself down without noise or difficulty. "This betokens good," thought he, pausing an

instant, in dreadful hesitation what direction to take. This momentary deliberation was fearfully interrupted by the hoarse voice of the men calling aloud, "*The boy has fled—let loose the bloodhound!*" These words sunk like a death-knell on his heart, for escape appeared now impossible, and his nerves seemed to melt away like wax in a furnace. "Shall I perish without a struggle?" thought he, rousing himself to exertion, and, helpless and terrified as a hare, pursued by its ruthless hunters, he fled across the heath. Soon the baying of the bloodhound broke the stillness of the night, and the voice of its masters sounded through the moor, as they endeavoured to accelerate its speed. Panting and breathless, the boy pursued his hopeless career, but every moment his pursuers seemed to gain upon his failing steps. The hound was unimpeded by the darkness which was to him so impenetrable, and its noise rung louder and deeper on his ear,—while the lanterns which were carried by the men gleamed near and distinct upon his vision.

At his fullest speed the terrified boy fell with violence over a heap of stones, and having nothing on but his shirt, he was severely cut in every limb. With one wild cry to Heaven for assistance, he continued prostrate on the earth, bleeding and nearly insensible. The hoarse voices of the men, and the still louder baying of the dog, were now so near, that instant destruction seemed inevitable; already he felt himself in their fangs, and the bloody knife of the assassin appeared to gleam before his eyes. Despair renewed his energy, and once more, in an agony of affright that seemed verging towards madness, he rushed forward so rapidly that terror seemed to have given wings to his feet. A loud cry near the spot he had left arose in his ears without suspending his flight. The hound had stopped at the place where the pedlar's wounds bled

so profusely, and deeming the chase now over, it lay down there, and could not be induced to proceed. In vain the men beat it with frantic violence, and cried again to put the hound on the scent,—the sight of blood satisfied the animal that its work was done, and it obstinately resisted every inducement to pursue the same scent a second time.

The pedlar boy in the meantime paused not in his flight till morning dawned ; and still as he fled, the noise of steps seemed to pursue him, and the cry of his would-be assassins sounded in the distance. He at length reached a village, and spread instant alarm throughout the neighbourhood ; the inhabitants were aroused with one accord into a tumult of indignation—several of them had lost sons, brothers, or friends on the heath, and all united in proceeding immediately to seize the old woman and her sons, who were nearly torn to pieces in their furious wrath. Three gibbets were at once raised on the moor, and the wretched culprits confessed before their execution to the destruction of nearly fifty victims in the Murder Hole, which they pointed out, and near which they suffered the penalty of their crimes. The bones of several murdered persons were with difficulty brought up from the abyss into which they had been thrust ; but so narrow is the aperture, and so extraordinary the depth, that all who see it are inclined to coincide in the tradition of the country people, that it is unfathomable.

The scene of these events still con-

tinues nearly as it was three hundred years ago : the remains of the old cottage, with its blackened walls (haunted, of course, by a thousand evil spirits), and the extensive moor, on which a more modern inn (if it can be dignified with such an epithet) resembles its predecessor in everything but the character of its inhabitants. The landlord is deformed, but possesses extraordinary genius ; he has himself manufactured a violin, on which he plays with untaught skill,—and if any *discord* be heard in the house, or any murder committed in it, *this* is his only instrument. His daughter (who has never travelled beyond the heath) has inherited her father's talent, and learned all his tales of terror and superstition, which she relates with infinite spirit ; but when you are led by her across the heath to drop a stone into that deep and narrow gulf to which our story relates,—when you stand on its slippery edge, and, parting the long grass with which it is covered, gaze into its mysterious depths,—when she describes, with all the animation of an eye-witness, the struggle of the victims clutching the grass as a last hope of preservation, and trying to drag in their assassin as an expiring effort of vengeance,—when you are told that for three hundred years the clear waters in this diamond of the desert have remained untasted by mortal lips, and that the solitary traveller is still pursued at night by the howling of the bloodhound,—it is then only that it is possible fully to appreciate the terrors of “The Murder Hole.”—*Blackwood's Magazine*, 1829.

THE MILLER OF DOUNE:

A TRAVELLER'S TALE.

CHAPTER I.

IN the reign of James the Fifth, the mill on the Teath, near Doune, was possessed, as it had been for abune a century, by a family of the name of Marshall.

They were a bauld and a strong race of men, and when the miller of whom we're now to speak was in his prime, it used to be a common saying in the kintra, "Better get a kick frae a naig's foot, than a stroke frae John Marshall;" and even now that he was threescore and one, there were unco few that liked to come to grips wi' him. But though John kent he need fear nae man, and would carry things wi' a high hand when needfu', yet he was onything but quarrelsome, and was aye mair ready to gree wi' a man than to fight wi' him; and as he was a gash sensible man, and thoroughly honest, he had mony frien's and weel-wishers, and was muckle respeckit in the hale kintra side.

John's family consisted of twa sons and a dochter, who had lost their mither when they were but weans. The eldest, James, was as like what his father was at the same age, as twa peas; only, if onything, a thought stronger. William, the next, was mair slender; but though he couldna put the stane, nor fling the fore-hammer, within mony an ell o' James, yet he could jump higher than cny man he had ever met wi'; and as for rinnin', naebody could come near him. Of Jeanie Marshall we need say nae mair than that she was a sensible, spirited, light-hearted lassie, the pride of her brothers, and her father's darling.

It happened ae night, as the miller was coming back frae gien his horse

a drink at the water, that he heard something cheep-cheeping in the grass at the roadside, and every now and then it gied a bit flee up in the air, and then doun again; and upon looking at it again, the miller saw that it was a robin chased by a whuttrit, which was trying to grip it; and the miller said to himself, "I canna thole to see the puir bit burdie riven a' to coopens afore my very een;" so he banged aff the horse, and ran and got it up in his hand, and he let drive sic a kick at the whuttrit, that the beast gaed up in the lift, and ower the hedge, just as if it had been a kuisten snewba'.

On lookin' at the robin, John saw some straes stickin' to't wi' burd-lime, which had stoppit it frae fleein', and he begood to pike them aff; but Clod, who was a restless brute, and was wearyin' for his stable, tuggit and ruggit sae at the helter, that the miller could come nae speed ava. "And now," says the miller, "gif I set you doun, puir thing, as ye are, some beast or another will come and worry ye; and it's no in my power to get on that dancing deevil's back wi' ae hand—sae gang ye in there;" and he lifted up the flap o' his pouch, and pat in the robin.

Now, John Marshall kentna that a' this time there was a man at the back o' the hedge wi' a cockit gun in his hand, ready to shoot the whuttrit; but who, when he saw the miller jump aff his horse, took doun the gun frae his shouther, to watch the upshot o't; and when he heard what the miller said, and saw him put the robin in his pouch, he thought to himself, "I maun ken something mair about this man;" sae he follows the miller at a distance.

And when he sees him come out o' the stable, and into the house, and the door steekit, and a' quiet, he slips up to a window which was a wee bit open, and whaur he could hear and see a' that gaed on. The first thing he sees is the miller and his family preparing for family worship, for that was a thing John Marshall ne'er missed ; and after the psalm was dune, the miller spreads the Bible before him, and pittin' his hand into his pouch for his napkin, to dight his spectacles, out comes napkin, an' burd, an' a'.

"Od," says Jeanie, saftly, " gif my father hasna brought hame a robin."

" Whaur got ye the bit robin, father?" said William.

" Ne'er ye mind, William, my man," said the miller ; " I'm gaun to read ye a part o' the Word o' God, and that will do ye mair gude than onything I hae to tell ye ;" and as he pat out his hand to tak the corner o' his napkin, the robin gied him a dab. " Aye, neebor!" says the miller. " But ye're no to blame, puir beastie, for ye wasna to ken whether I meant ye ill or gude. And now that I think o't," continued the miller, " I'll pass by our regular order the night, and read ye that chapter whaur we're tauld that no even a sparrow shall fa' to the grund without the Lord wills it."

When he had finished it, they a' went doun on their knees, and the miller, amang ither things, prayed that He, wha took care even o' the bit burds o' the air, would watch for their welfare, and gie them grace to resist a' temptation, and to live a gude and a godly life, like men and like Christians. And when it was ower, and Jeanie was putting by the Bible, a dirl comes to the door.

" See wha's that, Jeanie," cried the miller. Sae Jeanie opens it, and when she comes back, she says, " It's ane John Murdoch, father, wha's travell't a gey lang bit the day ; but gif it's no

convenient to tak him in, he'll just trudge on."

" Bring him ben, lassie," quoth the miller. Sae in walks John Murdoch, a plain, honest, kintra-like chiel ; and " Guid e'en to you, miller," says he.

" The same to you, frien'," says John Marshall ; " and sit ye doun, and pit by your bonnet. We're gaun to hae our parritch belyve, and if ye'll tak your share o' them, and stay a' night wi' us, we'll mak ye welcome."

" Wi' a' my heart," says John Murdoch, sitting himsel down. " And ye've gotten a bit burdie on the table, I see,—but it's a wee douf ways, I think."

" Ou aye," quoth the miller, " the puir thing's gotten a bit fright the night ; and it's a' stickin' wi' burd-lime, and I kenna how to get it aff."

" Let me see't," says John Murdoch, " I hae some bit notion o' thae things." An' he took a' the straes aff it, and dighted and cleaned its feathers, and made it just as right's ever.

" And whaur'll we put it now?" said he.

" "Od," quoth the miller, " it would amaist be a pity to put it out at the window the night ; sae, Jeanie, see, if there's naething to haud it till the morn's morning."

" We'll sune manage that," said Jeanie, takin' doun an auld cage.

The robin being safely disposed of, John Murdoch began to speak to the miller of a heap o' things, and he had the best o't on maist o' them ; but when he cam to speak o' kye, and on kintra matters, " I hae ye now, man," thought the miller ; but faith he found John Murdoch his match there too ; and he said to himsel, " Od, but he's a queer man that, sure eneugh." And John Murdoch gaed on tellin' a wheen funny stories. The miller leugh and better leugh, and Jeanie was sae ta'en up about them, that in she rins twa handfuls o' saut instead o' meal into the parritch,

and them sauted afore. Sae when they're set on the table, John Murdoch gets the first platefu' ; and when he tastes them, he says very gravely, "No that ill ; but maybe ye'll hae run out o' saut ?"

"Saut !" cried William, "do they want saut?" and in gangs a spoonfu'.

"Gudesake !" cried he, turning roun' to John Murdoch.

"What's wrang with them, William?" said the miller.

"Ou, naething, naething, father—only they're as saut's lick, that's a'."

"Gae awa wi' your havers," cried Jeanie ; "let me taste them. Bless me ! an' how in a' the wide warl' could that happen? I ne'er made sic a mistak in a' my days, an' I canna account for't in no gate."

"Now dinna ye gang and vex yoursel about it," said John Murdoch, "for they'll just gaur the yill there gang doun a' the better."

"If that's the gate o't," cried the miller, "they'll need strong yill frae the first ; sae, Jeanie, put ye that sma' thing by, and bring the ither."

"Na, na, gudeman," says John Murdoch, "if we do that, wee'l be fou ; sae let's begin wi' the sma' thing first, and we can tak the strong yill afterwards, at our leisure."

"Weel, weel," said the miller, "sae be't."

Sae after supper they fell to the strong yill, and to crackin', and the miller took his share in't, but nane o' his family said onything maist ; but they couldna keep their een aff John Murdoch when he was lookin' at their father, though they found that they couldna look him steady in the face when he turned to them, just frae something in his ee, they couldna tell what.

"And it's a bonnie place this o' yours, miller," said John Murdoch ; "and nae doubt you and your folk afore ye hae been a gey while in't."

"Deed hae we," said the miller, a wee

gravely, "and, as ye say, it's a gey bonnie bit place."

John Murdoch was gaun to ask something mair about it, but he stopped on getting a particular look frae Jeanie, and changed the subject ; but the miller noticed it, and guessing the reason, said to John Murdoch, "Ye see, frien', that me and my forefathers hae had this place for about twa hunder years, and we're sweet to leave't, and my bairns ken that, and dinna like to speak o't."

"And what's makin' ye leave't?" says John Murdoch ; "that's to say, if its no ony secret."

"Ou, nane ava," says the miller ; "it's just this, ye see : it's owner thinks that it's worth mair rent, and maybe he counts on our gien him mair than the value o't rather than gang awa, sae he's just put the double on't, and gang we maun ; for to stay here at that rate, would just rin awa wi' the wee thing I hae laid by for my bairns, which I would be sweet to see. It's no very muckle, to be sure ; but I can say this, John Murdoch, that it wasna gotten either by cheating or idleness. However, we needna weary you wi' our concerns, sae come, we's drink King James, and lang life to him."

"Wi' a' my heart, miller," quoth John Murdoch. "And nae doubt ye'll a' be gaun to the sports that's sune to be hauden at Stirling ; they say there'll be grand fun, and I was just thinking that your auld son there wadna hae a bad chance o' winning at puttin' the stane, or flinging the mell."

"And I ken," cried Jeanie, "wha wad hae some chance at the race, gif there's to be ane."

"Dinna brag, bairns," said the miller, "and then, if ye're waured, there's nae thing to be ashamed o' ; but whether we gang there or no, time will show ; in the meantime, Jeanie, bring anither bottle o' strong yill."

"Miller," quoth John Murdoch, "ken ye what hour it's ?"

"Me!" said the miller, "not I— maybe half an hour after nine."

"Because it just wants five minutes of eleven," quoth John Murdoch.

"Five minutes o' eleven!" cried the miller, "and menno in my bed! Faith, then,

frien', since ye dinna seem for't yoursel', we'll just let the yill stan', and be aff to our nests; sae a gude soun' sleep to you."

"And the same to you and yours," quoth John Murdoch, as he raise and gaed awa wi' William.

CHAPTER II.

NEXT morning the miller's family were up and out at the usual hour; but John Murdoch, who had wearied himsel' the day before, and who hadn'a, maybe, been used to sae muckle strong yill at ance, lay still; and it was aught o'clock when he cam into the kitchen and bade Jeanie gude mornin'.

"And how's the gudeman? and is he out or in?"

"How!" cries Jeanie, "he and the lave hae been up and out at their wark three hours syne."

"And what are *ye* gaun to be about, my dawtie?" says John Murdoch.

"I'm gaun to wash the kirk," says Jeanie.

"And suppose I haud it for *ye*, and help *ye*?" says he.

"Weel aweel," says Jeanie, "gin *ye* like; we'll hae't the sooner ower."

And John Murdoch did his best, and was very active; and when a' was dune, he says, "An' now, my dawtie, what am I to get for helping *ye*?"

"Nae mair," quoth Jeanie, "than the thanks *ye* hae gotten already."

"But in my kintra," says John Murdoch, "when a lad helps a lass to clean out a kirk, he aye gets *ae* kiss at least."

"We ken naething about thae fashions hereabouts," says Jeanie, "sae haud *ye* out o' my gate!"

But as she passed him, John Murdoch, who thought she wasna in earnest, drew her suddenly to him, and he had ta'en twa or three kisses before Jeanie could recollect herself; but the next minute she threw him frae her, and

catching the ladle, she ran to the parritch-pat on the fire, and whipped aff the lid; and if John Murdoch, who saw what was coming, hadn'a darted out at the back door, he wad hae had it a' about him; as it was, a part o' the het parritch played splarge aff the wa' on his coat.

"And now," thought John Murdoch, "is this real anger, or is't put on?" and he stood a wee bit aff, joking an' jeering her.

"Aye, aye," says he, "ye're makin' an unco wark about it, just as if *ye* hadn'a been kissed a dozen times frae lug to lug, an' by as mony lads, and no said a word about it."

"Ye notorious vagabond that *ye* are," cried Jeanie,—"but I'se sort *ye* for't;" and she flung down the ladle and ran to loose the muckle dog.

"Ye're surely no gaun to set the dog on *me*?" says John Murdoch.

"Am I no?" says Jeanie, drawing and working wi' the collar wi' a' her might.

John Murdoch, seeing her sae determined, slips to ae side, and gets his gun frae whaur he had hidden't.

"And now, Jeanie," cries he, "haud your hand, for see, I've a gun."

"I dinna care gin *ye* had twenty guns," said Jeanie, who had now unbuckled the collar, an' held it in her hands; "sae tak leg-bail an' aff wi' *ye*, my man, or Bawtie comes to ye."

"Jeanie," quoth John Murdoch, "I'm ready to walk awa peacefully, since it maun be sae; but I'll no be

hunted frae your father's house like a thief an' a scoundrel ; sae keep up your dog, if ye're wise."

"We'll sune try that," says Jeanie, loosening the collar ; "sae at him, Bawtie ! an' we'll sune see him rin."

But John Murdoch stirredna ae step, and when Bawtie made at him, he keepit him aff for a while, till the brute gettin' below the muzzle, made a dart at him ; and if John Murdoch hadn'a jumped quickly to ae side, he wad hae gripped him ; as it was, he took awa ane o' the tails o' his coat. And when Jeanie saw that, she was in a terrible fright, for she didna wish him hurt, and thought he wad hae ran for't when she loosed the dog, and she cried wi' a' her might for Bawtie to come back. But the beast wadna mind her, for he had gotten twa or three gude paps on the nose, which made him furious ; and sae when he's gaun to mak anither spring, John Murdoch, who saw there was naething else for it, levels at him and lets drive ; and round and round the beast gaed, and then ower wi' him ; and when Jeanie saw he was killed, she set up a great screigh, and ran till him, abusing John Murdoch.

"I'm sorry for't, but it's a' your ain fault, Jeanie," says he, "an' canna now be helpit ; sae fare-ye-weel." An' as he gaed awa, William comes runnin' in at the other side o' the house, an' cries to Jeanie to ken what's the matter.

"It's a' John Murdoch's doings," cried Jeanie ; "he first affronted me, an' now he's killed poor Bawtie."

"An' which way is he gane ?" cried William.

"Out that gate," said Jeanie ; and away went William like a shot.

But John Murdoch, who had heard what passed, and didna want to hae ony mair to do in the matter, coursed down ahint some bushes till William was passed ; then rising up, he took anither

direction, an' thought he had got clear o' him, but as he was stappin' ower a dike, William got a glimpse o' him. Doun he comes after him at a bonnie rate ; an' as he gets near him, "Stop, ye rascal !" he cries to him ; "ye may just as weel stop at ance, for ye may depend on my laying a dizzen on ye for every hunder ell ye mak me rin after ye."

And when John Murdoch heard that, the blude gaed up into his brow, an' he was thinking o' standin' still, when he hears James cry out,—

"What's the matter, William ? An' what are ye chasing the man for ?"

"He's misbehaved to Jeanie, an' shot Bawtie," cried William.

"Then taigle him, just taigle him, till I come up," cried James.

"It's needless," thought John Murdoch to himself, "to fight wi' twa o' them, an' ane o' them a second Samson, and to mak an explanation or apology wad be ten times waur, sae I'll e'en pit on ;" an' aff he gaed at nearly the tap o' his fit. After rinning a gude bit, he looks o'er his shouther, an' seeing naebody near him, he thinks they've gien't up ; but just as he's coming to the end o' a bit wood, he sees William, wha had ta'en a nearer cut, just afore him ; an' round he comes on him, crying, "Now, my man, I hae ye now," putting out his hand to catch John Murdoch ; but John drove down his hand in a moment, an' clapping his foot ahint William's, an' whirling him to ae side, "Tak ye that, my man," says he ; an' William gaed down wi' sic a breinge, that the blude spouted out frae his nose, an' the hale world gaed round wi' him.

It was a wee while or James cam up, an' when he saw William lying covered wi' blude, "The Lord preserve us," cried he, "the callant's killed !" an' he sat down beside him, an' got William's head on his knee, an' tried to recover him. By an' by, William opens

his een, an' when he sees James, "After him, after him," cries he, "an' no mind me."

"After him," says James, "an' the man a mile agate already? It wad be nonsense for me to try't."

"Then let me up, an' I'll try it myself," cried William.

But James held him fast. "The deil's in the callant," says he, "to think o' runnin', an' him no able to stand his lane. Lie still, I tell ye!" And William, who knew it was in vain for him to strive with his strong brother, thought it best no to struggle ony mair. When he had gotten quite round again, James helpit him up, an' as they're gaun down to the water for William to wash himsel, they meet Jeanie coming fleein' up the path; and when she saw William's bloody face and claes, she clasped her hands thegither, an' would hae fa'en, if James hadna keppit her.

When they questioned her about what had happened, she tellt it to them honestly frae first to last, and blamed hersel sair for being sae angry an' rash. when, after a', the man meant nae ill; but the thought o' what Geordie Wilson might think if he heard o't, an' the shootin' o' Bawtie thegither, had perfectly dumfounded her. "However," continued Jeanie, "I'm thankfu' that things are nae waur, an' that the man's awa."

"Aye, he's awa," says James, "but gin him an' me foregather again, I'll promise him the best paid skin he e'er got since he was kirstened."

"Weel, weel," said Jeanie, "but I hope ye'll ne'er meet; an' now we must gang and pit puir Bawtie out o' the gate, an' think on something to say about him, and about John Murdoch's gangin' awa sae early, before our father comes in to his breakfast."

CHAPTER III.

THE time was now drawing near for the sports to be held at Stirling, and William was aye wanting to speak to his father about it, and to ken if they were gaun; but Jeanie advised against it. "If ye speak till him, and fash him about it now," says she, "it's ten to ane but he'll say no, and then, ye ken, there's an' end o't; but gif ye say naething, and keep steady to your wark, like enough he may speak o' gaun himsel; sae tak my advice an' sae naething ava about it."

William did as Jeanie wanted him, but still the miller didna speak, an' now it was the afternoon of the day before the sports were to come on, an' no a word had been said about them; an' William was unco vexed, an' didna weel ken what to do. When he's sitting thinking about it, the door opens, an' in steps their neebour, Saunders Mushet, just to crack a wee; an' by an' by he

says, "Weel, miller, an' what time will ye be for setting aff the morn's morning?"

"Me!" said the miller, "an' what to do?"

"What to do?" says Saunders, "why, to see the sports at Stirling, to be sure; you'll surely never think o' missing sic a grand sight?"

"An' troth, Saunders," says the miller, "I had clean forgotten't. 'Od, I daur say there'll be grand fun, an' my bairns wad maybe like to see't; an' now that I think o't, they've dune unco weel this while past, especially William there, wha's wrought mair than e'er I saw him do afore in the same space o' time; sae get ye ready, bairns, to set out at five o'clock the morn's morning, an' we'll tak Saunders up as we gae by."

This was glad news to the miller's family, an' ye needna doubt but they were a' ready in plenty o' time; an'

when they cam to Stirling, they got their breakfast, an' a gude rest before aught o'clock cam, which was the hour when the sports were to begin ; an' grand sports they were, an' muckle diversion gaed on ; but nane o' the miller's family took ony share in them, till they cam to puttin' the stane, and flingin' the mell.

"Now James, my man," says Jeanie, squeezing his arm.

"I'll do my best, Jeanie," says James, "ye may depend on that ; and if I'm beaten, I canna help it, ye ken."

James lost at the puttin'-stane,—by about an inch just ; the folk said by the ither man's slight o' hand, an' having the art o't. But when they cam to fling the mell, there wasna a man could come within twa ell o' him. Sae James got the prize, which was a grand gun an' a fine pouther horn.

An' now the cry gaed round to clear the course, and for the ridders to come forrit ; and Jeanie she helps William aff wi' his coat and waistcoat, and maks him tie it round his waist, and gies him mony a caution no to rin ower fast at first, but to hain himself for the push ; an' when she has him a' right and sorted, she begins to look at the aught that's to rin wi' him. When her ee cam to the middle ane,—"Gudesake," says she, "wha's that ? Surely—yes—no—an' yet, if he had but yellow hair in place o' red, I could swear to him. Friend," continues Jeanie to the man next to her, "can ye tell me what's his name amang the ridders there,—the man in the middle, I mean, wi' the red head ?"

"Why, honest woman," said he, hesitating a little, "I'm not just sure,—that is to say,—but why do you ask ?"

"For a reason I ken mysel'," said Jeanie ; "but since ye canna, or winna, tell me, I'll try somebody else."

She then turned to look for James, but the signal was given, an' awa they went helter skelter, as if it was deil tak the hindmost. But mony o' them could-

na rin lang at that rate, and they drapp'd aff ane after another, till naebody was left but William and the red-headed man ; an' the cry got up that the miller's son wad win, for William had keepit foremost from the first. But some gash carles noticed that though the red-headed man was hindmost, he lost nae grund, an' there was nae saying how it might end. William himsel began to be a wee thing feared, for he had mair than ance tried to leave the ither man farer ahint him ; but as he quickened his pace, sae did the ither, an' he was never nearer nor ever farer frae him than about ten yards. In a little while afterwards they cam up to the distance-post, and when they had passed it a wee bit,—"Now's my time," thought William to himsel ; and he puts on faster, an' the cry raise that the miller's son had it clean, an' was leaving the ither ane fast, fast ; but that was sune followed by anither cry, that the red-haired man was coming up again. William heard him gaining on him, an' he gained an' gained, till he was fairly up wi' him ; an' now they ran awhile breast an' breast thegither ; but in spite o' a' that William could do, the red-headed man gaed by him, little by little, an' wan the race by four yards.

"My ain puir William," cried Jeanie, dawtin' an' makin' o' him, "no to be first. But ne'er mind it," continued she, "for ye hae muckle credit by it ; for a' the folk round me said that they ne'er saw sic a race since Stirling was a toun, sae ye're no to tak it to heart."

"Surely no," said William ; "an yet it's gey hard to be beaten."

"Weel, weel," said Jeanie, "so it is—so it is ; but dinna speak,—dinna speak yet ; just tak breath an' rest ye."

A cry now got up to mak room, an' gie air ; an' the crowd fell back an' made an open space between the twa runners ; an' when Jeanie turned round, lo and behold ! she sees John Murdoch, standing wi' his red wig in ae hand, an'

rubbin' his lang yellow hair wi' a napkin in the tither. An' what he had dune to her an' to Bawtie, an' makin' William lose the race too, made her sae angry, that up she flees to him,—“An' how daured ye kill our Bawtie?” she cries; “I say, how daured ye kill our Bawtie?”

Wi' that up starts James, “An' by my faith, John Murdoch, but ye'll hae the weight o' my sieve now;” but before he could do anything, in comes the Earl o' Lennox between them,—“What, sir, dare to strike your sovereign?”

“Preserve us a,” cried Jeanie, jumping back, and turning white and red, time about.

“Here,” continued the earl, “seize this fellow, and keep him fast till we can examine into it.”

“No, no, Lennox,” cried the King, panting for breath; “don't touch him,—dant touch him; there's no harm done. But where's the Miller o' Doune?—Bring John Marshall.” An' the cry raise up for the Miller o' Doune.

“An' wha wants me?” quoth John Marshall. “I'm here.”

“Your sovereign wants ye,” says ane o' the courtiers; “sae come ye to King James. An' now tak aff yer bonnet, an' stand there.” John Marshall stood still without lookin' up, waiting to hear what King James wanted wi' him.

An' he hears a voice say,—“Look at me, miller, an' tell me if you think we e'er met before.”

John Marshall raised his een, and after a pause, he says, “An please your Majesty, if it wadna offend your Grace, I wad say that ye had ance been at the Mill o' Doune.”

“Ye're right, miller,” said James, “ye're quite right. An' little did ye ken, when ye loup'd aff your horse to save the robin, an' to tak it hame wi' ye, that your sovereign was so near ye, an' saw it all, as well as the way that ye bring up your family to serve their Maker; an' it gied me a gude opinion o' ye, miller, an' all that I hae learned

since has confirmed me in it, an' makes me say, before a' the folk here present, that ye're a gude and an honest man. Ye tellt' me, miller, that ye wad hae to leave the mill; but I tell ye that I hae settled it, an' that it's yours at the auld rent, while grass grows an' water rins, an' lang may you an' yours possess it.”

King James having finished, the miller tried to say something; but his lip began to quiver, an' his ee to fill, an' he couldna speak; sae he claspit his bonnet between his twa hands, laid it to his breast, and bowed his head in silence to the king.

“It's enough,” said King James; “an' now call Geordie Wilson o' the Hope.” Sae Geordie was brought and placed before him, and the king said to him, “I hear, young man, that ye hae met wi' some misfortunes of late, an' I hae been askin' about you, an' find that ye're an industrious man, an' a man o' character, an' hae behaved yoursel weel in a' respects; sae gang ye hame to the Hope, an' ye'll maybe find something, baith in the house an' out o' the house, that will please ye. An' hear ye, Geordie Wilson,” continued King James, “if it happens, as it *may* happen, that ye court a lass, tak ye gude care that she's no quick o' the temper” (an' he glanced at Jeanie); “an' dinna mak ower muckle o' her, or gie her a' her ain way; for there's a saying, A birkie wife, an' a new lightit candle, are the better o' haein' their heads hauden down.”

“Come hither, William Marshall,” said King James; “this prize was for the best runner among his subjects, and the king canna tak it, sae it's yours; and, young man,” continued the king, in a lower voice, “ye got a sairer fa' than I intended ye, but my blude was up at the time,—for kings are no muckle used to haein' hands laid on them.”

“My liege,” cried the Earl of Lennox, “the Queen fears that danger may

arise from your Majesty's remaining so long uncovered after your late exertion, and her Majesty entreats that you will be pleased to throw this cloak around you."

" 'Tis well thought of, Lennox,"

said the king; "and now for a brisk walk, and a change of dress, and all will be well;" and as he went away the people threw up their hats and bonnets, and the air resounded with cries of, "Long live the good King James!"

CHAPTER IV.

AN' now the folk set aff for their ain hames, an' the miller and his family crackit wi' their neebours till they parted at the road that led to the mill; and then nane o' them said onything, for they were a' busy wi' their ain thoughts; an' when the miller gaed into the kitchen, the robin chirped and chirped, for he aye fed it, an' it was glad to see him.

The miller gets some seed in his hand, an' as he's feeding the robin, his heart begins to swell, an' his ee to fill, an' he says, "Bairns, wha wad hae thought it; I say," clearing his throat, "wha wad hae thought it, bairns, that sae muckle gude wad hae fa'en to our lot, an' a' coming out o' saving the life o' a bit burdie?"

"An' wha kens, father," said Jeanie, "but ye may be now rewarded for a' the gude that grandfather Thomas did, an' about which ye hae often tell't us? For ye ken there's a promise to that effect in the Bible, an' as the Bible canna lie, I ken wha'll hae a gude chance too."

"Ye're right, Jeanie," quoth the miller, "ye're very right; and gie me doun the Bible, and I'se read it to you."

Just as it was dune, the door flees open, an' in comes Geordie Wilson, clean out o' breath wi' running.

"What's the matter now, man?" says William.

"I'm sure it's something gude," says James; "I ken by his ee."

"Ou aye, ou aye," cries Geordie, "grand news! grand news!" an' he gaspit for breath.

"Tak a wee thought time," says James; "and now tell us."

"Weel, ye ken," says Geordie, "that we lost four cows, and an auld horse and a young ane, by the fire, an' a sair loss it was; an' when I heard what the king said, I wonder't, and I better wonder't, what could be the meaning o't. An' Jeanie, she says to me, 'If I was you, in place o' standing wondering there, I wad be aff to the Hope; 'sae aff I rins; and when I gets up till't, lo and behold! I sees sax fine cows, an' twa as pretty naigs as e'er I set een on, a' thrang puing awa at the grass; an' as I'm standing glowerin' at them, an' wondering whaur they cam frae, a man comes up to me, an' he says, 'Are ye Geordie Wilson?' says he. 'That's me,' says I."

"Weel then," says he, "there's a paper for ye"; an' as he put it into my hand he began to move awa.

"But will ye no stap in, frien', an' tak something?" says I.

"No, no," cries he, "I daurna bide; an' aff he rins.

"Sae I opens the paper, an' there I sees a letter from our landlord, telling me that as I was a man o' gude character, an' very industrious, he had sent me the kye an' the horse in a compliment to mak up my loss; an' saying that as he had a gude opinion o' me, he wad gie me a twa nineteen years' lease o' the Hope at the auld rent; and sae we'll be happy yet, Jeanie."

"What, sir!" cries the miller, "are ye thinking o' my Jeanie, an' we sae honour't as we hae been this day?"

"Gude Heaven!" exclaimed Geordie Wilson, grippin' the back o' a chair to keep himsel up;—an' nae wonder at it, when the miller spak sae gravely, that Jeanie hersel gied a great start. But weel can a bairn read what's in a parent's ee, though anither canna; an' the next minute she had the miller round the neck,—“An' how daured ye, father, gie me sic a fright?”

“Is—is—is your father only joking, Jeanie?” stammered Geordie Wilson.

“Atweel was I,” said the miller; “sae, tak her; an’ a’ that I hae to say is, that if I kent ony man that deserved her better, ye wadna hae gotten her. But dinna ye dawt her ower muckle, my man, or gie her a’ her ain way,—but mind ye what King James said the day.”

Geordie held up his hand, an’ lookit at Jeanie, as much as to say, “Do ye hear that, madam?”

But Jeanie, she half steikit her een, an’ made a mouth at him, just like, “An’ wha cares?”

“An’ now, bairns,” continued the miller, “I’m gaun to my room, and mauna be disturbtit.”

“He’s awa to pray to his Maker,” says Jeanie, “for a’ that’s happened to us, an’ I think we should a’ do the same. At ony rate, I can read the Bible.”

“Hout now, woman,” says Geordie Wilson, “can ye no just let it stand a wee, an’ gang outby for a little?”

“I dinna think it,” says Jeanie.

“But just a wee bit,” says Geordie; “nae mair than ten staps, unless ye like.”

“Aweel,” says Jeanie, “but mind, I’ll gang nae farer than just the end o’ the lane.”

“Jeanie,” says William, “ye’d better put on the pat for the kail.”

“Put on the pat!” exclaimed Jeanie, “an’ it no muckle past eleven o’clock! Is the man gane gyte?”

“There’s time eneugh, nae doubt,” said William, “gif ye’re back in time.”

“Back in time!” echoed Jeanie, “an’ me only gaun to the end o’ the lane—gae awa wi’ your havers, man!”

“Weel, weel,” said William, “we’ll see, we’ll see.”

“Ou aye,” said Jeanie, “ye’re aye thinking yoursel wiser than ithier folk.”

“I really maist dinna ken what to do wi’ mysel the day,” said William; “I can neither settle to work, nor yet sit still; ‘od, by-the-by, I’ll gang an’ ‘oup my fishing rod, to be ready for the neist shower.”

Sae he takts it doun an’ begins working at it, and presently he sees James rise and put on his bonnet.

“Whaur are ye gaun, James,” says he.

“I was thinking,” says James, “o’ gaun up to Wattie Simpson’s to see if they want ony potatoes.”

“Just as if they didna get a bow o’ them last Tuesday!” said William.

“Weel, I can stan in an’ speir how they like them.”

“Are ye sure, James, you’re gaun there?” asked William, a wee slyly.

“Where’er I’m gaun, William,” said James, “I’m gaun for nae harm.”

“I’ve gane far eneugh wi’ Samson,” thought William; “sae I’ll say nae mair.” An’ sae he keeps tying his fishing-rod; but no muckle minding what he’s doing, the string plays snap in twa.

“Toots!” says William, a wee angered, “and me sae near dune!” Sae he begins ower again, wi’ mair care; but he sune forgets himsel again, an’ snap gangs the twine a second time.

“The deil tak the string and the whaun too!” cried he, “I’ll meddle nae mair wi’t the day.” Sae he hangs it up, and then draws out his watch and examines it again. “It’s really a grand siller watch, an’ a grand siller chain too, an’ mony aane will be asking to look at it;—and I think Elie Allison

wad like to see it ;—and now that I mind o't, gif I didna promise to ca' and tell her a' the news, and me to forget it a' this time ! ”

Sae awa William fares to Elie's, and there he sits crackin' and laughin' at an unco rate, and never thinking o' the time o' day. And Elie's auntie, she says to him, “ And now, William, are ye for takin' a potato wi' us, or are ye gaun hame ? ”

An' his face turned a wee red, for he thought she wantit him awa ; and he said he was gaun hame, to be sure.

“ But dinna tak it amiss,” said the auntie, “ for I thought ye wad be ower late for hame.”

“ Nae fear o' that,” said William, “ for we dinna dine till twa o'clock.”

“ I kent that,” said she, “ but it's past it already.”

“ The deuce it is ! ” cried William, jumping up ; “ then farewell—I'll maybe see ye the morn.”

As he's hurrying hame, he sees somebody coming frae the road to the Hope, and walking unco fast.

“ Od,” thought he, “ can that be Jeanie ? —deed is't, an' I'll lay my lugs she hasna been hame yet. But I maun get before her, and then see if I dinna gie her't, for what she said to me the day.”

Sae awa he sets wi' a' his might, an' as he gets near the mill, aff wi' his coat, an' up wi' a spade, an' begins delving ; an' keeking ower his shouther, he sees Jeanie turning the corner o' the plantin', but he never lets on, nor looks round, till she's just beside him, an' speaks to him.

“ Hech ! ” says he, “ I'm glad he's ready at last ;—od, I really thought we were to get nae dinner the day.”

“ Is my father in the house ? ” says Jeanie.

“ Is your father in the house ? ” repeated William, “ odsake, lassie, hae ye no been hame yet ? ”

“ I was taigled,” answered Jeanie, looking a wee foolish.

“ An' the kail will no be on yet,” cried he ; “ I was sure o't now—quite sure o't ! ”

“ An' what for did ye no gang in and put them on yourself, then, if ye was sae sure o't ? ”

“ An' sae I wad, if you hadna threepit, and better threepit, that ye was gaun nae farer than the lane. But dinna put aff time here, for I'se warrant my father's in a bonny kippidge already.”

“ I'm no fear'd for that,” says Jeanie but she wasna very easy for a' that.

Sae when she comes in at the kitchen door, she sees the kail-pat standin' on the floor, and her father gien a bit pick to the robin.

“ Did ever mortal ken the like o' this ? ” cried she : “ naething to be dune, and my gude auld father sitting just as contentit there as if the dinner was ready to be put on the table ; but we'll no be lang o' makin' something.” An' she up wi' the stoup, and aff wi' the lid o' the pat, when the miller cries to her, “ Tak care, Jeanie, an' no spoil the kail ! ”

“ Weel, I declare,” she exclaimed, “ if that callant shouldna get his paiks, for gauring me believe that the kail wasna ready : but it was thoughtfu' o' him, after a', to pit them on ; and troth,” says she, “ they're uncommon gude.”

“ An' what for no, Jeanie ? ” asked the miller. “ Did ye think that your father had forgotten how to mak a patfu' o' kail ? ”

“ Did ye mak them, father ? ”

“ Troth did I ; wha else was there to do it ? ”

“ But couldna ye hae cried in William, father ? I'm sure it wad hae been better for him to hae been in the house, than puttin' himself into sic a terrible heat wi' delving this warm day.”

“ If William's in a heat,” quoth the miller, “ it's no wi' delving, for I haena seen him near the house the hale day, an' I was out twa or three times.”

“ Then I'll lay onything I ken whaur

he's been," said Jeanie ; "and him to hae the impudence to speak to me yon gate —but I se gie him't ;—an' yet what right hae I to be angry wi' him, me that's forgotten mysel sae muckle?"

"Dinna vex yoursel about that, my bairn," quoth the miller ; "what has happened the day's enough to put us a' out o' sorts ; but we'll a' come to ousels belyve. An' now, Jeanie, gang ye out an' look if ye can see James coming hame, an' then we'll hae our dinner."

Sae awa she gangs, and when William see's her coming, he pretends to be unco busy working.

"William," cries she, "ken ye whaur James is gane ?"

"Me!" said William, "how should I ken whaur folk stravaig to? I might rather hae askit you gif ye had fa'en in wi' him, I think."

"Aye, aye, my man, but ye're speaking rather crouse. And whaur hae ye been yoursel a' day, I wonder? No delvin', I'm sure, gif ane may judge by the wee pickle yird that's turned up."

"An' do ye think," said William, "that after a' my racing and rinnin', I should hae been delving a' day, and lighter wark to do about the farm?"

"An' whaur was ye, then, that father couldna see you when he was out?"

"Did my father cry on me?" asked William.

"No," said Jeanie ; "at least he didna say't."

"Then that's it,—just it; for he cries sae loud, that it wad hae wakened a man wi' the hale haystack abune him, forbye lyin' at the side o't."

"An' sae ye'll hae me to believe," says Jeanie, "that ye was sleepin'; but I'm thinking ye was another gate. I se find it out yet."

"Women's tongues, women's tongues!" said William, beating a piece yird as if he wad mak pouther o't ; "they're aye either fleechin' or flytin'."

"Did ye ever say that to Elie Allison? Ye've been there, I've a notion. But we'll say nae mair about it enow, for yonder's James ; sae pit ye on your coat, and bring in your spade ; or if ye'll wait, James will carry it for ye, for your arms maun be unco wearit!"

When William saw James coming alang, as grave-like as frae a preaching, and thought on whaur he had been, he kent he wad laugh in his face downright if he met him, and that might anger Samson ; sae he set aff by himself an' put by his spade. An' when he saw him fairly in the house, an' had his laugh out alane, he composed himself, and walked into the kitchen as if nae thing had happened.

CHAPTER V.

NEIST day the miller spoke to James anent his marriage, an' tell't him, as they were no to move frae the mill, it needna be putten aff ony langer ; sae it was settled to be in a fortnight, an' that created an unco bustle in the house. An' Jeanie was every now and then speakin' o' how they were a' to manage, but the miller ne'er seemed to mind her.

Soe day, when they're in the kitchen

by themsel's, she begins on't again : "An' James an' his wife will hae to get the room that he an' William are in ; an' then William he maun either get mine, or sleep outby, for there'll be nae puttin' him in yon cauld, damp bed, unless we want him to gang like a cripple ; sae I dinna ken what's to be dune."

"Ye forget, Jeanie," said the miller, "that John Murdoch sleepit there,

an' he didna seem to be the waur o't."

"Aye, for ae night, nae doubt, and in fine weather ; but how lang will that last?"

The miller gies her nae answer ; but after sittin' thinking a wee, he rises and takcs down his bonnet.

"It's a fine day for being out," says Jeanie ; "but are ye gaun far, father ?"

"Nae farer than the Hope," said the miller.

"The Hope !" exclaimed Jeanie, as her face reddened.

"Ay," says the miller ; "and I'm thinking o' speirin' if there's room there for aye o' ye."

"Now God bless my guude auld father," said Jeanie ; "he sees brawly what I wanted, and wadna even look me in the face to confuse me."

"Geordie Wilson," cries the miller, "when will it suit you to marry my dochter ?"

"The day—the morn—ony day," answers Geordie, as happy's a prince.

"Because I was thinking," says the miller, "that it might be as weel to pit James's waddin' and yours ower thegither."

"Wi' a' my heart," says Geordie, "wi' a' my heart !"

"Weel, then," quoth the miller, "I'll awa hame and see what our Jeanie says to't."

"And I'll gang wi' you," cries Geordie.

"Come your wa's then, my man," says the miller.

And sae as they're gaun down the road thegither, they meets William, an' Geordie tells him how matters stood. An' when William hears o't, he shakes Geordie by the hand, an' awa he flees ower ditch and dyke, an' is hame in nae time. An' after resting himself a minute, an' to tak breath, in he gangs to the kitchen ; an' when Jeanie sees him, she

says, "Ye're warm-like, William,—ye've surely been running ?"

"Is onything wrang wi' my father ?" asked he.

"Gude forbid !" said Jeanie ; "but what maks ye speir ?"

"Ou, naething ava, amaist ; but only I met him walking unco grave-like, an' he scarcely spak to me ; an' I met wi' Geordie Wilson too, and he didna say muckle either."

"Preserve us a'!" cries Jeanie ; "if onything has happened atween the twa !"

"What could put that nonsense in your head, lassie ?" said William. "By-the-by," continues he, after a pause, "Geordie's at the end o' the lane, an' wishing muckle to speak to ye."

"An' what for did ye no tell me that at first, ye haverel ?" cried Jeanie ; and out she flees. An' just as she's turning the corner, she runs against her father wi' a great drive.

"The lassie's in a creel, I think !" quoth the miller ; "but it's the same wi' them a'."

"Jeanie ! my ain Jeanie !" whispers Geordie, "an' it's a' settled for neist week, and we'll be sae happy !"

Jeanie held him at arm's length frae her, that she might look him in the face.

"I see it's true ! I see it's true !" she said, "an' ye're no joking me ! An' that wicked callant, to gang and gie me sic a fright ! Hech ! I haena gotten the better o't yet !"

"An' now, Jeanie, that I haeseen ye," says Geordie, "I maun rin awa hame and tell my guude auld mither that it's a' fixed ; for she wasna in when your father cam to the Hope ; and then I maun awa to the toun for things. An' what'll I bring ye, Jeanie ? what'll I bring ?"

"Ou, just onything ye like," said she ; "bring back yoursel, that's a' Jeanie cares about."

An' she stands an' looks after him till he's out o' sight ; an' as she turns about,

"Jeanie ! my ain Jeanie !" says James, takin' her in his arms.

"My ain gude and aye kind brither!" said Jeanie, resting her head on his shouther.

"She'll no speak to *me*, nae doubt," says William, his voice shakin' a wee.

"Ah, ye wicked callant!" says Jeanie, kissing his cheek. "But ye mauna plague me nae mair; na, ye'll no daur do't!"

"No!" cries William, "I'm sure I'm fit for a' that Geordie Wilson can do ony day, an' maybe mair."

Jeanie was gaun to answer, but she got her ee on the miller standing at the door.

"I maun hae *his* blessing first," she cries, "and then Jeanie's heart will be at peace."

When the miller saw her coming, he gaes slowly back to his ain room, an' in she comes after him, and, "Bless me, bless your bairn, my gude auld father!—you that's been father an' mither, an' a' to her since before she could guide hersel! Bless your Jeanie, an' she'll hae naething mair to wish for!"

"How like she's to her mither!" said the miller in a low voice; "but ye'll no mind her sae weel, Jeanie. I mind weel, that on the night before she dee't, an' when I was like ane distractit, 'It's the will o' Providence, John,' says she, 'and we maun a' bow till't; but dinna ye grieve sae sair for my loss, John; for young as she is yet, my heart tells me that I'm leaving ane ahint me, wha'll be a blessing an' a comfort to ye when I'm awa'; and ne'er were truer words spoken," continued the miller, "for ne'er frae that day to this was her father's heart wae for Jeanie; sae bless you, my bairn, an' may a' that's gude attend ye, an' may ye be spared to be a comfort and an example to a' around ye, lang, lang after your auld father's head's laid low." An' as he raised her frae her knees he kissed her, an' then turned slowly frae her, an' Jeanie slippit saftly awa..

On the neist Friday the twa marriages took place, an' a' the folk sat down to a gude an' a plentiful dinner, an' there was an unco deal o' fun an' laughing gaed on. An' when dinner was ower and thanks returned, the miller cried for a' to fill a fu', fu' bumper. "An' now," says he, "we'll dring King James's health, an' lang may he and his rule ower us."

This led them to speak o' his coming there as John Murdoch; and some o' them that hadna heard the hale story, askit the miller to tell't.

"Wi' a' my heart," quoth the miller; "but first open that cage-door, Jeanie, for it's no fitting that *it*, wha had sae muckle share in't, should be a prisoner at sic a time."

An' the robin cam fleein' out to the miller's whistle, an' lightit on the table beside him.

When the miller was dune wi' the story, "An' now, frien's," said he, "ye may learn this frae it, that it's aye best to do as muckle gude and as little ill as we can. But there's a time for a'thing," continued he; "sae here, Jeanie, my dawtie, put ye by the robin again; and now, lads, round wi' the whisky."

They a' sat crackin' an' laughin' thegither, till it was time for Geordie an' his wife to be settin' aff for the Hope, and the rest o' the folk gaed wi' them, an' a' was quiet at the mill again.

In twa year after that, William was married to Elie Allison. And when he was three score and ten, the miller yielded up his spirit to Him that gied it; an' when King James heard that he was dead, he said publicly, that he had lost a gude subject and an honest man, and that he wished there was mair folk in the kintra like John Marshall.

And James succeeded to his father; an' after James cam James's sons, and their sons after them for never sae lang; and, for aught I ken to the contrair, there's a Marshall in the Mill o' Doune at this day.—"The Odd Volume."

THE HEADLESS CUMINS.

BY SIR THOMAS DICK LAUDER.

IN the parish of Edinkellie, a place towards the centre of Morayshire, in the northern part of Scotland, there is a romantic and fearful chasm, supposed to have been at one time the bed of the river Divie. It has two entrances at the upper end, and the ancient courses which led the river into these successively are easily traceable. The lower extremity of the ravine terminates abruptly about forty feet high above the Divie, that flows at its base. This spot is one of a very interesting nature. Its name in Gaelic signifies “the Hollow of the Heads ;” a name originating, it is said, in the following transaction :—

Near the upper end of the ravine there is a curious cavern, formed of huge masses of fallen crags, that cover the bottom of the place. It enters downwards like a pit, and the mouth, which is no more than wide enough to admit a man, is not easily discovered. Here it was that the brave Allister Bane secreted himself after the Battle of the Lost Standard. At this time the Castle of Dunphail was besieged by Randolph, Earl of Moray ; and Allister Bane, who could no longer make head against him in the open field, contented himself with harassing the enemy. Knowing that his father and his garrison were reduced to great want, he and a few of his followers disguised themselves as countrymen, and, driving a parcel of horses, yoked in rude sledges, laden with sacks, they came to the edge of the glen where Randolph’s beleaguered party lay, and, pretending to be peasants carrying meal from the low country to the Highlands, they entreated their protection from one Allister Bane, of whom they were afraid. Their prayer being granted, they unyoked their horses, and took care to leave their sledges at the

brink of the precipice, so that, on a given signal agreed on with the garrison, they tumbled sledges, sacks, and all over into the glen below, and the garrison, making a sally at the same time, each man bore off a sack on his back, whilst the pretended peasants sprang on their horses, and were out of sight before the astonished sentinels of the enemy had well given the alarm.

Randolph was so provoked on learning who the author of this trick was, that he set a price upon his head. A certain private pique led a Cumin to betray his master’s lurking-place. His enemies hurried to the spot to make sure of their game ; but when they saw the small uncouth-looking aperture, they paused in a circle round it. One only could descend at a time, and the death of him who should attempt it was certain ; for the red glare of the Cumin’s eye in the obscurity within, and the flash of his dirk-blade, showed that he had wound up his dauntless soul to die with the “*courage*” of the lion on his crest. They called on him to surrender at discretion. He replied by howling a deep note of defiance from the dark womb of the rocks,—“Let me but come out, and with my back to that crag, I will live or die like a Cumin !” “No !” exclaimed the leader of his foes ; “thou shalt die like a fox as thou art !” Brushwood was quickly piled over the hole, but no word of entreaty for mercy ascended from below. Heap after heap was set fire to, and crammed blazing down upon him. His struggles to force a way upwards were easily repelled by those above, and after a sufficient quantity of burning matter had been thrust in to ensure his suffocation, they rolled stones over the mouth of the hole.

When the cruel deed was done, and

the hole opened, Allister Bane was found reclining in one corner, his head muffled in his plaid, and resting on the pummel of his sword, with two or three attendants around him, all dead. To make sure of them, their heads were cut off and thrown, one after another, into the fortress, with this horrible taunt

to the old man,—“Your son provided you with meal, and we now send you flesh to eat with it.” The veteran warrior recognised the fair head of his son. “It is a bitter morsel indeed,” said he, as he took it up, kissed it, and wept over it; “but I will gnaw the last bone of it before I surrender.”

THE LADY ISABEL:

A LEGENDARY TALE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

THE Lady Isabel was a Scottish baron's daughter, and far was she famed. Were others fair, she was fairer; were others rich, she was richer. In short, all perfections were said to be centred in the Lady Isabel, and yet that quality for which she ought to have been most prized, seemed the one which made the least noise in the world,—this was her devoted duty to her father. She was his only child—the child of his old age, the idol of his heart, and the lamp of his life. But still was he a cruel father; for in return for her dutious affection, he had determined to wed her to a man she had never seen, while he knew that her heart was another's.

The Lord of Ormisdale was the son of his ancient friend, and the possessor of broad lands in a distant part of Scotland. The two old men had sworn to each other that their children should be united, but ere this paction, the youth had been sent abroad to be initiated in the art of war—an art but too much practised in his native country at that time; for be it known that our peerless beauty bloomed in the 15th century, when the feuds of the Scottish nobility were frequent and deadly. Much was bruited abroad of the goodly person and brave qualities of the young earl, but of this Lady Isabel had no opportunity of

judging, for never, as has been told, had she seen him. She had, however, but too often seen his cousin Roderick, and to him was her heart devoted. It was true he had neither title, nor lands, nor vassals; but he was a handsome, a noble, and a gallant youth, and he had knelt at her feet, confessed his love, and swore eternal constancy; and though, when she thought of her father, she turned coldly away, it was but to treasure his image in her heart, and to weep most bitter tears for the hapless fate which doomed her to wed another. Roderick, by-and-by, went away to a foreign land, distraught by his passion for the Lady Isabel; and the time was long, and he returned not, and none spoke of him, or seemed to think of him, save his disconsolate love. But it was not so; for the old Baron loved him for his worth and manly bearing; and when he saw his daughter drooping her head like a lily, he too was unhappy, and repented him of his rash vow, though he would rather have sacrificed his own life, and hers too, than have broken his oath. And so time passed on, and many were the suitors that sought the hand of the Lady Isabel. Some loved her for herself, some for her great possessions, and some for both; but all were sent hopeless away.

And now the time was at hand when the sun was to shine upon the nineteenth birthday of the baron's daughter, and multitudes were invited to his castle to celebrate the festival with mirth and revelry. Many were the reasons on which he had thrown wide his castle gates and welcomed numerous guests, and ample the hospitable provision he had made for them; but never, during his life, or that of his forefathers, had there been such doings as now. Whole hecatombs of sheep and oxen bled on the occasion, with wain-loads of deer, wild and tame fowl, and other creatures. Every country seemed to have been taxed for fruit and other delicacies, while beer of the strongest, and wines of the richest, seemed, by the quantities provided, to be intended absolutely to flow in rivers. The birthday of the Lady Isabel had been celebrated, as it came round, ever since that on which she first drew her breath, but never had there been even imagined such preparations as this. The tongues of all the gossiping old dowagers in the kingdom were set a-going on the occasion: some assigned one reason for this extraordinary entertainment, and some another. There were several whose eager curiosity caused them so much uneasiness, that they went so far as to ask an explanation of the old baron himself. They were all, however, foiled in the attempt to penetrate the mystery, and therefore settled in their own minds that the old man had either lost his wits altogether, or was in his dotage.

Nor, to speak the truth, did the young lady, on whose account was all this turmoil, feel less surprised than other people at her father's unbounded extravagance, especially as there arrived from the capital chest after chest, packed with the richest vestments, cut in the approved fashion of the day, and boxes filled with jewellery, which, added to the family gems she already possessed,

might have furnished the dowry of a princess.

The day at length arrived for which all this extraordinary preparation had been made; and the baron, not content with charging his daughter to apparel herself in a suit which, by its exceeding splendour, seemed to have been particularly intended for the occasion, and to wear her most costly jewels, also commanded her maidens to tax their wits in ornamenting and setting off, to the best advantage, the charms of their young mistress.

And now, after having arranged all things, and being promised implicit obedience by his daughter, the mystery of all his magnificent proceedings was partly unravelled by his telling her that they were that night to expect the arrival of the Earl of Ormsdale. He moreover presented her with a mask, and informed her that he had taken order that each of his guests should put on a visor before they enter the ball-room, after they left the banqueting-hall, and that he had done this for her sake, that the eye of idle curiosity should not read in her features what was passing in her mind when she first met her betrothed. It was in vain that the afflicted Lady Isabel pled most movingly for a more private meeting, for her father was deaf to her entreaties, while he affirmed that his precaution of the visor would do away all objections, and was so peremptory in the matter, that, as usual, she acquiesced; and having thanked and kissed his dutiful daughter, he withdrew from her with renewed youth in his step, and joy in his eye. How different, however, were the feelings of his daughter on this momentous subject! and sore averse was she to meet the man she was sure that she could never love; and many were the tears shed, and many the resolves she made to retract all her promises, and live and die in solitude. But then she bethought her of the despair of her poor

old father—of his tender, though mistaken love—of the few remaining years of his life embittered by disappointment—and his death probably hurried on through her means. All this was too much when laid in the balance with only her own happiness, and she still sustained the character of a dutiful daughter, by heroically determining to sacrifice all selfishness at the altar of filial duty and affection.

But though this was her ultimate resolve, we need not be surprised that, when decked in her splendid attire, and presiding in the gorgeous banqueting-hall of her father, she looked and felt as if assisting at a funeral feast, and that she even then would have been the better of the visor to prevent many conjectures on what her saddened looks might mean. But the time for assuming the mask arrived, and the nobles of the land, with their haughty dames, and many a knight, and many a damsel fair, bedight in silk and cloth of gold, and blazing with jewels, graced the tapestryed ball-room, on which a flood of brilliant light was poured from lamp and torch. And each in joyous mood, cheered by the merry minstrels, and by the sound of harp and viol, impatiently awaited the commencement of the dance, when they were informed that it was stayed for an expected and honourable guest. And now again curiosity was at its height. But presently there was a flourish of the music, and a cry of the ushers to make way for the noble Earl of Ormisdale, and the large doors at the foot of the hall were flung wide open, and the gallant young earl, masked, and attended by a train of young gentlemen, all his kinsmen, or picked and chosen friends, advanced amid murmurs of admiration to the middle of the hall. Here they were met and welcomed by the baron, who led the earl to his lovely daughter, and having presented him to her, the guests were presently gratified by seeing the gallant

young nobleman take the hand of the Lady Isabel, and lead her out to dance, Nor were there any present whose eyes did not follow them with admiration, though the measure chosen by the high-born damsel savoured more that night of grace and dignity than lightness of either heart or heel. Meantime, the old baron was so full of joy and delight, that it was remarked by all, as he was still seen near his daughter and her partner. But their hearts were both quaking : the unhappy Lady Isabel's with thinking of her promise to her father, and that of her betrothed with a fear known only to himself, for he had heard that she had loved, and now observed her narrowly. And, not content with this, he asked her, as he sat beside her, many a wily question, till at last he spoke his fears in plain guise, and she, with many sighs and tears shed within her mask, confessed the truth ; still saying, that for her father's sake she would be his wife, if he accepted of her on such terms. But now her father whispered to her that she must presently prepare to keep her word, as this must be her bridal-night, for to that purpose alone was this high wassail kept. Her lover, too, no way daunted by his knowledge of her heart, pressed on his suit to have it so. And now was the despairing damsel almost beside herself, when her father, announcing aloud his purpose to the astonished guests, called for the priest, and caused all to unmask. But in what words shall we paint the surprise, the delight, the flood of joy that came upon the heart of the Lady Isabel, when the earl's mask was removed, and she beheld in him her much beloved Roderick, who, his cousin being dead, was now the Earl of Ormisdale !

And now was each corner of the castle, from basement stone to turret height, filled with joyous greetings, and the health and happiness of the noble Earl Roderick, and of his bride, the dutiful

Lady Isabel, deeply drank in many a wassail bowl.

The stately castle and its revels, the proud baron and his pomp, the beauteous dame and her children's children, have now passed away into oblivion, save

this slight record, which has only been preserved in remembrance of the daughter's virtue, who preferred her father's happiness to her own.
—Chambers's *Edinburgh Journal*, 1833.

THE DESPERATE DUEL.

BY D. M. MOIR, M.D.

Nay, never shake thy gory locks at me ;
Thou canst not say I did it !—*Macbeth*.

IT was on a fine summer morning, somewhere about four o'clock, when I waukened from my night's rest, and was about thinking to bestir mysel, that I heard the sound of voices in the kail-yard, stretching south frae our back windows. I listened—and I listened—and I better listened—and still the sound of the argle-bargling became more distinct, now in a fleeching way, and now in harsh angry tones, as if some quarrelsome disagreement had ta'en place. I hadnna the comfort of my wife's company in this dilemma ; she being awa, three days before, on the top of Tammy Trundle the carrier's cart, to Lauder, on a visit to her folks there ; her mother (my guddemother, like) having been for some time ill, with an income in her leg, which threatened to make a lameter of her in her old age ; the twa doctors there, no speaking of the blacksmith, and sundry skeely old women, being able to mak naething of the business ; so nane happened to be wi' me in the room, saving wee Benjie, who was lying asleep at the back of the bed, with his little Kilmarnock on his head, as sound as a top. Nevertheless, I lookit for my claes ; and opening one-half of the window-shutter, I saw four young birkies well dressed ; indeed three of them customers

of my ain, all belanging to the toun ; twa of them young doctors ; ane of them a writer's clerk ; and the ither a grocer ; the hale looking very fierce and fearsome, like turkey cocks ; swaggering about with their hands and arms as if they had been the king's dragoons ; and priming a pair of pistols, which ane of the surgeons, a speerity, out-spoken lad, Maister Blister, was haddin' in his grip.

I jaloused at ance what they were after, being now a wee up to firearms ; so I saw that skaith was to come o't, and that I wad be wanting in my duty on four heads—first, as a Christian ; second, as a man ; third, as a subject ; and fourth, as a father, if I withheld mysel frae the scene, nor lifted up my voice, however fruitlessly, against such crying iniquity as the wanton letting out of human blood ; sae furth I hastened—half-dressed, with my gray stockings rolled up my thighs, over my corduroys, and my auld hat aboon my cowl—to the kail-yard.of contention.

I was just in the nick of time, and my presence checked the effusion of blood for a little ;—but wait a wee. So high and furious were at least three of the party, that I saw it was catching water in a sieve to waste words on them, knowing, as clearly as the sun serves the world, that interceding would be of

no avail. Howsomever, I made a feint, and threatened to bowl awa for a magistrat, if they wadna desist, and stop from their barbarous and bluidy purpose ; but, i'fegs, I had better have keepit my counsel till it was asked for.

" Tailor Mansie," quoth Maister Thomas Blister, with a furious cock of his eye (he was a queer Eirish birkie, come ower for his yedication), " since ye have ventured to thrust your nose," said he, " where nobody invited ye, you must just stay," said he, " and abide by the consequences. This is an affair of honour," quoth he ; " and if ye venture to stir one foot from the spot, och then," said he, " by the poker of St Patrick, but whisk through ye goes one of these leaden playthings, as sure as ye ever spoiled a coat, or cabbaged broadcloth. Ye have now come out, ye observe, hark ye," said ye, " and are art and part in the business ;—and, if one, or both, of the principals be killed, poor devils," said he, " we are all alike liable to take our trial before the Justiciary Court, hark ye ; and, by the powers," said he, " I doubt not but that, on proper consideration, they will allow us to get off mercifully, on this side of hanging, by a verdict of manslaughter."

'Od, I fund mysel immediately in a scrape ; but how to get out of it baffled my gumption. It set me all a shivering ; yet I thought that, come the warst when it wad, they surely wad not hang the faither of a helpless sma family, that had naething but his needle for their support, if I made a proper affidavy, about having tried to make peace between the youths. So, conscience being a brave supporter, I abode in silence, though not without many queer and qualmish thochts, and a pit-patting of the heart, no unco pleasant in the tholing.

" Blood and wounds!" bawled Maister Thomas Blister, " it would be a disgrace for ever on the honourable profession of physic," egging on puir Maister Willie

Magneezhy, whose face was as white as double-bleached linen, " to make any apology for such an insult. You not fit to doctor a cat,—you not fit to bleed a calf,—you not fit to poultice a pig,—after three years apprenticeship," said he, " and a winter with Doctor Monro ? By the cupping-glasses of 'Pocrates," said he, " and by the pistol of Gallon, but I would have caned him on the spot, if he had just let out half as much to me. Look ye, man," said he, " look ye, man, he is all shaking" (this was the truth) ; " he'll turn tail. At him like fire, Willie."

Magneezhy, though sadly frightened, looked a thocht brighter, and made a kind o' half stab forrit. " Say that ye'll ask my pardon once more,—and if no," said the puir lad, with a voice broken and trembling, " then we must just shoot one another."

" Devil a bit," answered Mr Bloatsheet, " devil a bit. No, sir ; you must down on your bare knees, and beg ten thousand pardons for calling me out here, in a raw morning ; or I'll have a shot at you, whether you will or no."

" Will you stand that ?" said Blister, with eyes like burning coals. " By the living jingo and the holy poker, Magneezhy, if you stand that—if you stand that, I say, I stand no longer your second, but leave you to disgrace, and a caning. If he likes to shoot you like a dog, and not as a gentleman, then let him do it and be done."

" No, sir," replied Magneezhy, with a quivering voice, which he tried in vain, puir fellow, to render warlike (he had never been in the volunteers, like me). " Hand us the pistols, then and let us do or die !"

" Spoken like a hero, and brother of the lancet : as little afraid at the sight of your own blood, as at that of your patients ;" said Blister. " Hand over the pistols."

It was an awfu' business. Gude save us, such goings on in a Christian land !

While Mr Bloatsheet, the young writer, was in the act of doing what he was bid, I again, but to no purpose, endeavoured to slip in a word edgeways. Magneezhy was in an awfu' case ; if he had been already shot, he could not have looked mair clay and corpse-like ; so I took a kind of whispering, while the stramash was drawing to a bloody conclusion, with Maister Harry Molas-ses, the fourth in the spree, who was standing behind Bloatsheet, with a large mahogany box under his arm, something in shape like that of a licensed pack-man, ganging about from house to house through the country-side, selling toys and trinkets, or niffering plated ear-rings and sic like, wi' young lasses, for auld silver coins or cracked tea-spoons.

"Oh !" answered he, very composedly, as if it had been a canister fu' of black rappee, or blackguard, that he had just lifted down from his tap shelf, " it's just Doctor Blister's saws, whittles, and big knives, in case ony of their legs or arms be blown away, that he may cut them off." Little wad have prevented me sinking down through the ground, had I not remembered, at the preceese moment, that I myself was a soldier, and liable, when the hour of danger threatened, to be called out, in marching order, to the field of battle. But by this time the pistols were handed to the two infatuated young men—Mr Bloatsheet, as fierce as a hussar dragoon, and Magneezhy, as supple in the knees as if he was all on oiled hinges ; so the next consideration was to get weel out of the way, the lookers-on running nearly as great a chance of being shot as the principals, they no being accustomed, like me, for instance, to the use of arms ; on which account, I scouged mysel behind a big pear-tree ; baith being to fire when Blister gied the word " Off ! "

I had hardly jounced into my hidy-hole, when " crack, crack " played the pistols like lightning, and as soon as I

got my cowl ta'en from my een, and looked about, wae's me, I saw Magneezhy clap his hand to his brow, wheel round like a peerie, or a sheep seized wi' the sturdie, and then play flap down on his braidside, breaking the necks of half a dozen cabbage-stocks, three of which were afterwards clean lost, as we couldna pit them all into the pat at ae time. The hale o' us ran forrit, but foremost was Bloatsheet, who, seizing Magneezhy by the hand, said wi' a mournful face, "I hope you forgive me ?—Only say this as long as you have breath, for I am off to Leith harbour in half a minute."

The blude was rinning ower puir Magneezhy's een, and drib-dribbling frae the neb o' his nose ; so he was truly in a pitiful state ; but he said with more strength than I thocht he could have mustered,— " Yes, yes, fly for your life, I am dying without much pain—fly for your life, for I am a gone man ! "

Bloatsheet bounced through the bit kail-yard like a maukin, clamb ower the bit wa', and aff like mad ; while Blister was feeling Magneezhy's pulse with ane hand, and looking at his doctor's watch, which he had in the ither.

" Do ye think that the puir lad will live, doctor ? " said I till him.

He gave his head a wise shake, and only observed, " I dare say, it will be a hanging business amang us. In what direction do you think, Mansie, we should all take flight ? "

But I answered bravely, " Flee them that will, I'se flee nane. If am ta'en prisoner, the town-officers maun haul me frae my ain house ; but nevertheless I trust the visibility of my innocence will be as plain as a pikestaff to the een of the fifteen."

" What then, Mansie, will we do with poor Magneezhy ? Give us your advice in need."

" Let us carry him down to my ain bed," answered I ; " I wad not desert a fellow-creature in his dying hour ! "

Help me down wi' him, and then flee the country as fast as you are able!"

We immediately proceeded, and lifted the poor lad, wha had now dwaumed away, upon our wife's hand-barrow, Blister taking the feet, and me the oxters, whereby I got my waist-coat a' japanned with blude; so, when we got him laid right, we proceeded to carry him between us down the close, just as if he had been a stickit sheep, and in at the back door, which cost us some trouble, being narrow, and the barrow getting jammed in; but, at lang and last, we got him streeked out aboon the blankets, having previously shookeen Benjie, and waukened him out of his morning's nap.

"A' this being accomplished, and got ower, Blister decamped, leaving me my leeful lane, excepting Benjie, wha was next to naebody, in the house with the deein' man. What a frightfu' face he had, all smeared ower with blude and pouther! And I really jaloused, that if he deed in that room, it wad be haunted for ever mair, he being in a manner a murdered man, so that, even should I be acquitted of art and part, his ghaist might still come to bother us, making our house a hell upon yirth, and frightening us out of our seven senses. But, in the midst of my dreadful surmeeses, when all was still, so that you might hae heard a pin fall, a knock-knock-knock cam to the door, on which, recovering my senses, I dreaded first that it was the death-chap, and syne that the affair had gotten wind, and that it was the beagles come in search of me; so I kissed little Benjie, wha was sitting on his creepie, blubbering and greeting for his parritch, while a tear stood in my ain ee, as I gaed forrit to lift the sneck, to let the officers, as I thocht, harry our house, by carrying aff me, its master; but it was—thank Heaven!—only Tammy Bodkin coming in whistling to his wark with some measuring-papers hinging round his neck.

"Ah, Tammy," said I to him, my heart warming at a kent face, and making the laddie, although my bounden servant by a regular indenture of five years, a friend in my need, "come in, my man. I fear ye'll hae to tak charge of the business for some time to come. Mind what I tell'd ye about the shaping and the cutting, and no making the goose ower warm, as I doubt I am about to be harled awa to the Tolbooth."

Tammy's heart loup'd to his mouth.

"Ay, maister," he said, "ye're jokin'. What should ye have done that ye should be ta'en to sic an ill place?"

"Ah, Tammy, lad," answered I, "it is but ouwer true."

"Weel, weel," quo' Tammy—I really thought it a great deal of the laddie—"weel, weel, they canna prevent me coming to sew beside ye; and, if I can tak the measure of customers without, ye can cut the claih within. But what is't for, maister?"

"Come in here," said I to him, "and believe your ain een, Tammy, my man."

"Losh me!" cried the puir laddie, glowering at the bluidy face of the man in the bed. "Ay—ay—ay! maister; save us, maister; ay—ay—ay—you have na cloured his harpan wi' the goose? Ay, maister, maister! what an unyirthly sight!! I doubt they'll hang us a';—you for doing't, and me on suspicion, and Benjie as art and part, puir thing. But I'll rin for a doctor. Will I, maister?"

The thocht had never struck me before, being in a sort of a manner dung stupid; but catching up the word, I said wi' all my pith and birr, "Rin, rin, Tammy, rin for life and death!"

Tammy bolted like a nine-year-auld, never looking ahint his tail: so, in less than ten minutes, he returned, hauling alang auld Doctor Gripes, whom he had wakened out o' his bed by the lug and horn, at the very time I was trying to quiet young Benjie, wha was following me up and doun the house, as

I was pacing to and fro in distraction, girning and whinging for his breakfast.

"Bad business, bad business; bless us, what is this?" said the auld doctor, staring at Magneezhy's bluidy face through his silver spectacles—"What's the matter?"

The puir patient knew at once his maister's tongue, and, lifting up ane of his eyes—the other being stiff and barkened down—said in a melancholy voice, "Ah, master, do ye think I'll get better?"

Doctor Gipes, auld man as he was, started back, as if he had been a French dancing-master, or had strampit on a het bar of iron. "Tom, Tom, is this you? What, in the name of wonder, has done this?" Then feeling his wrist—"But your pulse is quite good. Have you fallen, boy? Where is the blood coming from?"

"Somewhere about the hairy scaup," answered Magneezhy, in his own sort of lingo. "I doubt some artery's cut through!"

The doctor immediately bade him lie quiet, and hush, as he was getting a needle and silken thread ready to sew it up; ordering me to get a basin and water ready, to wash the puir lad's physog. I did so as hard as I was able, though I wasna sure about the blude just; auld Doctor Gipes watching ower my shouther, wi' a lighted penny candle in ae hand, and the needle and thread in the ither, to see where the bluid spouted frae. But we were as daft as wise; so he bade me tak my big shears, and cut out a' the hair on the fore part of the head as bare as my loaf; and syne we washed, and better washed; so Magneezhy got the ither ee up, when the barkened blude was loosed, looking, though as pale as a clean shirt, mair frightened than hurt; until it became plain to us all, first to the doctor, syne to me, and syne to Tammy Bodkin, and last of a' to Magneezhy himsel, that his skin was na sae much as peeled; so we

helped him out of the bed, and blithe was I to see the lad standing on the floor, without a haud, on his ain feet.

I did my best to clean his neckcloth and sark-neck of the blude, making him look as decentish as possible, considering circumstances; and lending him, as the Scripture commands, my tartan mantle to hide the infirmity of his bluidy breeks and waistcoat. Hame gaed he and his maister thegither, me standing at our close mouth, wishing them a gude morning, and blithe to see their backs. Indeed, a condemned thief with the rope about his neck, and the white cowl tied ower his een, to say naething of his hands yerked thegither behind his back, and on the nick of being thrown ower, couldna been mair thankfu' for a reprieve than I was, at the same blessed moment. It was like Adam seeing the deil's rear marching out o' Paradise, if ane may be allowed to think sic a thing.

The hale business—tag, rag, and bob-tail—soon, however, spunkit out, and was the town talk for mair than ae day. But ye'll hear.

At the first I pitied the puir lads, that I thocht had fled for ever and aye from their native country to Bengal, Seringapatam, Copenhagen, Botany Bay, or Jamaica; leaving behint them all their friends and auld Scotland, as they might never hear o' the gudeness of Providence in their behalf. But—wait a wee.

Wad ye believe it? As sure's death, the hale was but a wicked trick played by that mischievous loon Blister and his cronies, upon ane that was a simple and saft-headed callant. Deil a haet was in the ae pistol but a pluff o' pouther; and, in the ither, a cartridge paper, fu' o' bull's blood, was rammed down upon the charge, the which, hitting Magneezhy on the ee-bree, had caused a business that seemed to have put him out o' life, and nearly put me (though ane of the volunteers) out of my seven senses.—*Mansie Wauch.*

THE VACANT CHAIR.

BY JOHN MACKAY WILSON.

YOU have all heard of the Cheviot mountains. They are a rough, rugged, majestic chain of hills, which a poet might term the Roman wall of nature ; crowned with snow, belted with storms, surrounded by pastures and fruitful fields, and still dividing the northern portion of Great Britain from the southern. With their proud summits piercing the clouds, and their dark, rocky declivities frowning upon the glens below, they appear symbolical of the wild and untamable spirits of the Borderers who once inhabited their sides. We say, you have all heard of the Cheviots, and know them to be very high hills, like a huge clasp riveting England and Scotland together ; but we are not aware that you may have heard of Marchlaw, an old, gray-looking farm-house, substantial as a modern fortress, recently, and, for aught we know to the contrary, still inhabited by Peter Elliot, the proprietor of some five hundred surrounding acres. The boundaries of Peter's farm, indeed, were defined neither by fields, hedges, nor stone walls. A wooden stake here, and a stone there, at considerable distances from each other, were the general landmarks ; but neither Peter nor his neighbours considered a few acres worth quarrelling about ; and their sheep frequently visited each other's pastures in a friendly way, harmoniously sharing a family dinner, in the same spirit as their masters made themselves free at each other's tables.

Peter was placed in very unpleasant circumstances, owing to the situation of Marchlaw House, which, unfortunately, was built immediately across the "ideal line," dividing the two kingdoms ; and his misfortune was, that, being born within it, he knew not whether he was an Englishman or a Scotchman. He

could trace his ancestral line no farther back than his great-grandfather, who, it appeared from the family Bible, had, together with his grandfather and father, claimed Marchlaw as their birthplace. They, however, were not involved in the same perplexities as their descendant. The parlour was distinctly acknowledged to be in Scotland, and two-thirds of the kitchen were as certainly allowed to be in England ;—his three ancestors were born in the room over the parlour, and, therefore, were Scotchmen beyond question ; but Peter, unluckily, being brought into the world before the death of his grandfather, his parents occupied a room immediately over the debatable boundary line which crossed the kitchen. The room, though scarcely eight feet square, was evidently situated between the two countries ; but, no one being able to ascertain what portion belonged to each, Peter, after many arguments and altercations upon the subject, was driven to the disagreeable alternative of confessing he knew not what countryman he was. What rendered the confession the more painful was, that it was Peter's highest ambition to be thought a Scotsman. All his arable land lay on the Scottish side ; his mother was collaterally related to the Stuarts ; and few families were more ancient or respectable than the Elliots. Peter's speech, indeed, bewrayed him to be a walking partition between the two kingdoms—a living representation of the Union ; for in one word he pronounced the letter *r* with the broad, masculine sound of the North Briton, and in the next with the liquid *burr* of the Northumbrians.

Peter, or, if you prefer it, Peter Elliot, Esquire of Marchlaw, in the counties of Northumberland and Roxburgh, was,

for many years, the best runner, leaper, and wrestler between Wooler and Jedburgh. Whirled from his hand, the ponderous bullet whizzed through the air like a pigeon on the wing ; and the best "putter" on the Borders quailed from competition. As a feather in his grasp, he seized the unwieldy hammer, swept it round and round his head, accompanying with agile limb its evolutions, swiftly as swallows play around a circle, and hurled it from his hands like a shot from a rifle, till antagonists shrunk back, and the spectators burst into a shout. "Well done, squire ! the squire for ever !" once exclaimed a servile observer of titles. "Squire ! wha are ye squiring at ?" returned Peter. "Confound ye ! where was ye when I was christened squire ? My name's Peter Elliot—your man, or anybody's man, at whatever they like !"

Peter's soul was free, bounding, and buoyant as the wind that caroled in a zephyr, or shouted in a hurricane, upon his native hills ; and his body was thirteen stone of healthy substantial flesh, steeped in the spirits of life. He had been long married, but marriage had wrought no change upon him. They who suppose that wedlock transforms the lark into an owl, offer an insult to the lovely beings who, brightening our darkest hours with the smiles of affection, teach us that that only is unbecoming in the husband which is disgraceful in the man. Nearly twenty years had passed over them ; but Janet was still as kind, and, in his eyes, as beautiful as when, bestowing on him her hand, she blushed her vows at the altar ; and he was still as happy, as generous, and as free. Nine fair children sat around their domestic hearth, and one, the youngling of the flock, smiled upon its mother's knee. Peter had never known sorrow ; he was blest in his wife, in his children, in his flocks. He had become richer than his fathers. He was beloved by his neighbours, the

tillers of his ground, and his herdsmen : yea, no man envied his prosperity. But a blight passed over the harvest of his joys, and gall was rained into the cup of his felicity.

It was Christmas-day, and a more melancholy-looking sun never rose on the 25th of December. One vast, sable cloud, like a universal pall, overspread the heavens. For weeks the ground had been covered with clear, dazzling snow ; and as throughout the day the rain continued its unwearied and monotonous drizzle, the earth assumed a character and appearance melancholy and troubled as the heavens. Like a mastiff that has lost its owner, the wind howled dolefully down the glens, and was re-echoed from the caves of the mountains, as the lamentations of a legion of invisible spirits. The frowning, snow-clad precipices were instinct with motion, as avalanche upon avalanche, the larger burying the less, crowded downward in their tremendous journey to the plain. The simple mountain rills had assumed the majesty of rivers ; the broader streams were swollen into the wild torrent, and, gushing forth as cataracts, in fury and in foam, enveloped the valleys in an angry flood. But at Marchlaw the fire blazed blithely ; the kitchen groaned beneath the load of preparations for a joyful feast ; and glad faces glided from room to room.

Peter Elliot kept Christmas, not so much because it was Christmas, as in honour of its being the birthday of Thomas, his first-born, who that day entered his nineteenth year. With a father's love, his heart yearned for all his children ; but Thomas was the pride of his eyes. Cards of apology had not then found their way among our Border hills ; and as all knew that, although Peter admitted no spirits within his threshold, nor a drunkard at his table, he was, nevertheless, no niggard in his hospitality, his invitations were accepted

without ceremony. The guests were assembled ; and the kitchen being the only apartment in the building large enough to contain them, the cloth was spread upon a long, clean, oaken table, stretching from England into Scotland. On the English end of the board were placed a ponderous plum-pudding, studded with temptation, and a smoking sirloin ; on Scotland, a savoury and well-seasoned haggis, with a sheep's-head and trotters ; while the intermediate space was filled with the good things of this life, common to both kingdoms and to the season.

The guests from the north and from the south were arranged promiscuously. Every seat was filled—save one. The chair by Peter's right hand remained unoccupied. He had raised his hands before his eyes, and besought a blessing on what was placed before them, and was preparing to carve for his visitors, when his eyes fell upon the vacant chair. The knife dropped upon the table. Anxiety flashed across his countenance, like an arrow from an unseen hand.

"Janet, where is Thomas?" he inquired ; "hae nane o' ye seen him?" and, without waiting an answer, he continued—"How is it possible he can be absent at a time like this? And on such a day, too? Excuse me a minute, friends, till I just step out and see if I can find him. Since ever I kept this day, as mony o' ye ken, he has always been at my right hand, in that very chair ; I canna think o' beginning our dinner while I see it empty."

"If the filling of the chair be all," said a pert young sheep-farmer, named Johnson, "I will step into it till Master Thomas arrive."

"Ye're not a father, young man," said Peter, and walked out of the room.

Minute succeeded minute, but Peter returned not. The guests became hungry, peevish, and gloomy, while an excellent dinner continued spoiling before them. Mrs Elliot, whose good-

nature was the most prominent feature in her character, strove, by every possible effort, to beguile the unpleasant impressions she perceived gathering upon their countenances.

"Peter is just as bad as him," she remarked, "to ha'e gane to seek him when he kenned the dinner woudna keep. And I'm sure Thomas kenned it woud be ready at one o'clock to a minute. It's sae unthinking and unfriendly like to keep folk waiting." And, endeavouring to smile upon a beautiful black-haired girl of seventeen, who sat by her elbow, she continued in an anxious whisper—"Did ye see naething o' him, Elizabeth, hinny?"

The maiden blushed deeply ; the question evidently gave freedom to a tear, which had, for some time, been an unwilling prisoner in the brightest eyes in the room ; and the monosyllable, "No," that trembled from her lips, was audible only to the ear of the inquirer. In vain Mrs Elliot despatched one of her children after another, in quest of their father and brother ; they came and went, but brought no tidings more cheering than the moaning of the hollow wind. Minutes rolled into hours, yet neither came. She perceived the prouder of her guests preparing to withdraw, and, observing that "Thomas's absence was so singular and unaccountable, and so unlike either him or his father, she didna ken what apology to make to her friends for such treatment ; but it was needless waiting, and begged they would use no ceremony, but just begin."

No second invitation was necessary. Good humour appeared to be restored, and sirloins, pies, pasties, and moorfowl began to disappear like the lost son. For a moment, Mrs Elliot apparently partook in the restoration of cheerfulness ; but a low sigh at her elbow again drove the colour from her rosy cheeks. Her eye wandered to the farther end of the table, and rested on the unoccupied seat of her husband, and the vacant

chair of her first-born. Her heart fell heavily within her ; all the mother gushed into her bosom ; and, rising from the table, “What in the world can be the meaning o’ this ?” said she, as she hurried, with a troubled countenance, towards the door. Her husband met her on the threshold.

“Where hae ye been, Peter ?” said she, eagerly. “Hae ye seen naething o’ him ?”

“Naething, naething,” replied he ; “is he no cast up yet ?” And, with a melancholy glance, his eyes sought an answer in the deserted chair. His lips quivered, his tongue faltered.

“Gude forgie me,” said he, “and such a day for even an enemy to be out in ! I’ve been up and doun every way that I can think on, but not a living creature has seen or heard tell o’ him. Ye’ll excuse me, neebors,” he added, leaving the house ; “I must awa again, for I canna rest.”

“I ken by mysel, friends,” said Adam Bell, a decent-looking Northumbrian, “that a faither’s heart is as sensitive as the apple o’ his e’e ; and I think we would show a want o’ natural sympathy and respect for our worthy neighbour, if we didna every one get his foot into the stirrup without loss o’ time, and assist him in his search. For, in my rough, country way o’ thinking, it must be something particularly out o’ the common that would tempt Thomas to be amissing. Indeed, I needna say tempt, for there could be no inclination in the way. And our hills,” he concluded, in a lower tone, “are not ower chancy in other respects, besides the breaking up o’ the storm.”

“Oh !” said Mrs Elliot, wringing her hands, “I have had the coming o’ this about me for days and days. My head was growing dizzy with happiness, but thoughts came stealing upon me like ghosts, and I felt a lonely soughing about my heart, without being able to tell the cause ; but the cause is come at

last ! And my dear Thomas—the very pride and staff o’ my life—is lost—lost to me for ever !”

“I ken, Mrs Elliot,” replied the Northumbrian, “it is an easy matter to say compose yourself, for them that dinna ken what it is to feel. But, at the same time, in our plain, country way o’ thinking, we are always ready to believe the worst. I’ve often heard my father say, and I’ve as often remarked it myself, that, before anything happens to a body, there is a something comes ower them, like a cloud before the face o’ the sun ; a sort o’ dumb whispering about the breast from the other world. And though I trust there is naething o’ the kind in your case, yet as you observe, when I find myself growing dizzy, as it were, with happiness, it makes good a saying o’ my mother’s, poor body. ‘Bairns, bairns,’ she used to say, ‘there is ower muckle singing in your heads to-night ; we will have a shower before bed-time.’ And I never, in my born days, saw it fail.”

At any other period, Mr Bell’s dissertation on presentiments would have been found a fitting text on which to hang all the dreams, wraiths, warnings, and marvellous circumstances, that had been handed down to the company from the days of their grandfathers ; but, in the present instance, they were too much occupied in consultation regarding the different routes to be taken in their search.

Twelve horsemen, and some half-dozen pedestrians, were seen hurrying in divers directions from Marchlaw, as the last faint lights of a melancholy day were yielding to the heavy darkness which appeared pressing in solid masses down the sides of the mountains. The wives and daughters of the party were alone left with the disconsolate mother, who alternately pressed her weeping children to her heart, and told them to weep not, for their brother would soon return ; while the tears stole down her

own cheeks, and the infant in her arms wept because its mother wept. Her friends strove with each other to inspire hope, and poured upon her ear their mingled and loquacious consolation. But one remained silent. The daughter of Adam Bell, who sat by Mrs Elliot's elbow at table, had shrunk into an obscure corner of the room. Before her face she held a handkerchief wet with tears. Her bosom throbbed convulsively ; and, as occasionally her broken sighs burst from their prison house, a significant whisper passed among the younger part of the company.

Mrs Elliot approached her, and taking her hand tenderly within both of hers—“Oh, hinny ! hinny !” said she, “yer sighs gae through my heart like a knife ! An' what can I do to comfort ye ? Come, Elizabeth, my bonny love, let us hope for the best. Ye see before ye a sorrowin' mother—a mother that fondly hoped to see you an’—I canna say it—an’ I am ill qualified to gie comfort, when my own heart is like a furnace ! But, oh ! let us try and remember the blessed portion, ‘Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth,’ an’ inwardly pray for strength to say ‘His will be done !’”

Time stole on towards midnight, and one by one the unsuccessful party returned. As foot after foot approached, every breath was held to listen.

“No, no, no,” cried the mother, again and again, with increasing anguish, “it’s no the foot o’ my ain bairn ;” while her keen gaze still remained riveted upon the door, and was not withdrawn, nor the hope of despair relinquished, till the individual entered, and with a silent and ominous shake of his head, betokened his fruitless efforts. The clock had struck twelve ; all were returned, save the father. The wind howled more wildly ; the rain poured upon the windows in ceaseless torrents ; and the roarin’ of the mountain rivers gave a character of deeper ghostliness to their

sepulchral silence; for they sat, each wrapt in forebodings, listening to the storm ; and no sounds were heard, save the groans of the mother, the weeping of her children, and the bitter and broken sobs of the bereaved maiden, who leaned her head upon her father’s bosom, refusing to be comforted.

At length the barking of the farm dog announced footsteps at a distance. Every ear was raised to listen, every eye turned to the door ; but, before the tread was yet audible to the listeners—“Oh ! it is only Peter’s foot !” said the miserable mother, and, weeping, rose to meet him.

“Janet, Janet !” he exclaimed, as he entered, and threw his arms around her neck, “what’s this come upon us at last ?”

He cast an inquisitive glance around his dwelling, and a convulsive shiver passed over his manly frame, as his eye again fell on the vacant chair, which no one had ventured to occupy. Hour succeeded hour, but the company separated not ; and low, sorrowful whispers mingled with the lamentations of the parents.

“Neighbours,” said Adam Bell, “the morn is a new day, and we will wait to see what it may bring forth ; but, in the meantime, let us read a portion o’ the Divine Word, an’ kneel together in prayer, that, whether or not the day-dawn cause light to shine upon this singular bereavement, the Sun o’ Righteousness may arise wi’ healing on His wings, upon the hearts o’ this afflicted family, an’ upon the hearts o’ all present.”

“Amen !” responded Peter, wringing his hands ; and his friend, taking down the “Ha’ Bible,” read the chapter wherein it is written—“It is better to be in the house of mourning than in the house of feasting ;” and again the portion which saith—“It is well for me that I have been afflicted, for before I was afflicted I went astray.”

The morning came, but brought no tidings of the lost son. After a solemn farewell, all the visitants, save Adam Bell and his daughter, returned every one to their own house ; and the disconsolate father, with his servants, again renewed the search among the hills and surrounding villages.

Days, weeks, months, and years rolled on. Time had subdued the anguish of the parents into a holy calm ; but their lost first-born was not forgotten, although no trace of his fate had been discovered. The general belief was, that he had perished on the breaking up of the snow ; and the few in whose remembrance he still lived, merely spoke of his death as a "very extraordinary circumstance," remarking that "he was a wild, venturesome sort o' lad."

Christmas had succeeded Christmas, and Peter Elliot still kept it in commemoration of the birthday of him who was not. For the first few years after the loss of their son, sadness and silence characterized the party who sat down to dinner at Marchlaw, and still at Peter's right hand was placed the vacant chair. But, as the younger branches of the family advanced in years, the remembrance of their brother became less poignant. Christmas was, with all around them, a day of rejoicing, and they began to make merry with their friends ; while their parents partook in their enjoyment, with a smile, half of approval and half of sorrow.

Twelve years had passed away ; Christmas had again come. It was the counterpart of its fatal predecessor. The hills had not yet cast off their summer verdure ; the sun, although shorn of its heat, had lost none of its brightness or glory, and looked down upon the earth as though participating in its gladness ; and the clear blue sky was tranquil as the sea sleeping beneath the moon. Many visitors had again assembled at Marchlaw. The sons of Mr Elliot, and the young men of the party, were

assembled upon a level green near the house, amusing themselves with throwing the hammer, and other Border games, while himself and the elder guests stood by as spectators, recounting the deeds of their youth. Johnson, the sheep-farmer, whom we have already mentioned, now a brawny and gigantic fellow of two-and-thirty, bore away in every game the palm from all competitors. More than once, as Peter beheld his sons defeated, he felt the spirit of youth glowing in his veins, and, "Oh !" muttered he, in bitterness, "had my Thomas been spared to me, he would hae thrown his heart's blude after the hammer, before he would hae been beat by e'er a Johnson in the country !"

While he thus soliloquized, and with difficulty restrained an impulse to compete with the victor himself, a dark, foreign-looking, strong-built seaman, unceremoniously approached, and, with his arms folded, cast a look of contempt upon the boasting conqueror. Every eye was turned with a scrutinizing glance upon the stranger. In height he could not exceed five feet nine, but his whole frame was the model of muscular strength ; his features open and manly, but deeply sunburnt and weather-beaten ; his long, glossy, black hair, curled into ringlets by the breeze and the billow, fell thickly over his temples and forehead ; and whiskers of a similar hue, more conspicuous for size than elegance, gave a character of fierceness to a countenance otherwise possessing a striking impress of manly beauty. Without asking permission, he stepped forward, lifted the hammer, and, swinging it around his head, hurled it upwards of five yards beyond Johnson's most successful throw. "Well done !" shouted the astonished spectators. The heart of Peter Elliott warmed within him, and he was hurrying forward to grasp the stranger by the hand, when the words groaned in his throat, "It was just such a throw as my Thomas would

have made!—my own lost Thomas!” The tears burst into his eyes, and, without speaking, he turned back, and hurried towards the house to conceal his emotion.

Successively, at every game, the stranger had defeated all who ventured to oppose him, when a messenger announced that dinner waited their arrival. Some of the guests were already seated, others entering; and, as heretofore, placed beside Mrs Elliot was Elizabeth Bell, still in the noon tide of her beauty; but sorrow had passed over her features, like a veil before the countenance of an angel. Johnson, crest-fallen and out of humour at his defeat, seated himself by her side. In early life he had regarded Thomas Elliot as a rival for her affections; and, stimulated by the knowledge that Adam Bell would be able to bestow several thousands upon his daughter for a dowry, he yet prosecuted his attentions with unabated assiduity, in despite of the daughter’s aversion and the coldness of her father. Peter had taken his place at the table; and still by his side, unoccupied and sacred, appeared the vacant chair, the chair of his first-born, whereon none had sat since his mysterious death or disappearance.

“Bairns,” said he, “did name o’ ye ask the sailor to come up and tak a bit o’ dinner wi’ us?”

“We were afraid it might lead to a quarrel with Mr Johnson,” whispered one of the sons.

“He is come without asking,” replied the stranger, entering; “and the wind shall blow from a new point if I destroy the mirth or happiness of the company.”

“Ye’re a stranger, young man,” said Peter, “or ye would ken this is no a meeting o’ mirth-makers. But, I assure ye, ye are welcome, heartily welcome. Haste ye, lasses,” he added to the servants; “some o’ ye get a chair for the gentleman.”

“Gentleman, indeed!” muttered Johnson between his teeth.

“Never mind about a chair, my hearties,” said the seaman; “this will do!” And, before Peter could speak to withhold him, he had thrown himself carelessly into the hallowed, the venerated, the twelve years unoccupied chair! The spirit of sacrilege uttering blasphemies from a pulpit could not have smitten a congregation of pious worshippers with deeper horror and consternation, than did this filling of the vacant chair the inhabitants of Marchlaw.

“Excuse me, sir! excuse me, sir!” said Peter, the words trembling upon his tongue; “but ye cannot—ye cannot sit there!”

“O man! man!” cried Mrs Elliot, “get out o’ that! get out o’ that!—take my chair!—take ony chair i’ the house!—but dinna, dinna sit there! It has never been sat in by mortal being since the death o’ my dear bairn!—and to see it filled by another is a thing I canna endure!”

“Sir! sir!” continued the father, “ye have done it through ignorance, and we excuse ye. But that was my Thomas’s seat! Twelve years this very day—his birthday—he perished, Heaven kens how! He went out from our sight, like the cloud that passes over the hills—never, never to return. And, O sir, spare a father’s feelings! for to see it filled wrings the blood from my heart!”

“Give me your hand, my worthy soul!” exclaimed the seaman; “I revere—nay, hang it! I would die for your feelings! But Tom Elliot was my friend, and I cast anchor in this chair by special commission. I know that a sudden broadside of joy is a bad thing; but as I don’t know how to preach a sermon before telling you, all I have to say is—that Tom aint dead.”

“Not dead!” said Peter, grasping the hand of the stranger, and speaking with an eagerness that almost choked his utterance. “O sir! sir! tell me

how!—how!—Did ye say living?—Is my ain Thomas living?"

"Not dead, do ye say?" cried Mrs Elliot, hurrying towards him and grasping his other hand—"not dead! And shall I see my bairn again? Oh! may the blessing o' Heaven, and the blessing o' a broken-hearted mother be upon the bearer o' the gracious tidings! But tell me—tell me, how is it possible? As ye would expect happiness here or hereafter, dinna, dinna deceive me!"

"Deceive you!" returned the stranger, grasping, with impassioned earnestness, their hands in his—"Never!—never! and all I can say is—Tom Elliot is alive and hearty."

"No, no!" said Elizabeth, rising from her seat, "he does not deceive us; there is that in his countenance which bespeaks a falsehood impossible." And she also endeavoured to move towards him, when Johnson threw his arm around her to withhold her.

"Hands off, you land-lubber!" exclaimed the seaman, springing towards them, "or, shiver me! I'll show daylight through your timbers in the turning of a handspike." And, clasping the lovely girl in his arms, "Betty! Betty, my love!" he cried, "don't you know your own Tom? Father, mother, don't you know me? Have you really forgot your own son? If twelve years have made some change on his face, his heart is as sound as ever."

His father, his mother, and his brothers clung around him, weeping, smiling, and mingling a hundred questions together. He threw his arms around the neck of each, and in answer to their enquiries, replied—"Well! well! there is time enough to answer questions, but not to-day—not to-day!"

"No, my bairn," said his mother, "we'll ask you no questions—nobody shall ask you any! But how—how were you torn away from us, my love? And, O hinny! where—where hae you been?"

"It's a long story, mother," said he, "and would take a week to tell it. But, howsoever, to make a long story short, you remember when the smugglers were pursued, and wished to conceal their brandy in our house, my father prevented them; they left muttering revenge—and they have been revenged. This day twelve years, I went out with the intention of meeting Elizabeth and her father, when I came upon a party of the gang concealed in Hell's Hole. In a moment half-a-dozen pistols were held to my breast, and, tying my hands to my sides, they dragged me into the cavern. Here I had not been long their prisoner, when the snow, rolling down the mountains, almost totally blocked up its mouth. On the second night they cut through the snow, and, hurrying me along with them, I was bound to a horse between two, and, before daylight, found myself stowed, like a piece of old junk, in the hold of a smuggling lugger. Within a week I was shipped on board a Dutch man-of-war, and for six years was kept dodging about on different stations, till our old yawning hulk received orders to join the fleet, which was to fight against the gallant Duncan at Camperdown. To think of fighting against my own countrymen—my own flesh and blood—was worse than to be cut to pieces by a cat-o'-nine tails; and, under cover of the smoke of the first broadside, I sprang upon the gunwale, plunged into the sea, and swam for the English fleet. Never, never shall I forget the moment that my feet first trod upon the deck of a British frigate! My nerves felt as firm as her oak, and my heart free as the pennant that waved defiance from her masthead! I was as active as any one during the battle; and when it was over, and I found myself again among my own countrymen, and all speaking my own language, I fancied—nay, hang it! I almost believed—I should meet my father, my mother, or my dear Bess,

on board of the British frigate. I expected to see you all again in a few weeks at farthest ; but, instead of returning to old England, before I was aware, I found it was helm about with us. As to writing, I never had an opportunity but once. We were anchored before a French fort ; a packet was lying alongside ready to sail ; I had half a side written, and was scratching my head to think how I should come over writing about you, Bess, my love, when, as bad luck would have it, our lieutenant comes to me, and says he, ‘Elliot,’ says he, ‘I know you like a little smart service ; come, my lad, take the head oar, while we board some of those French bum-boats under the batteries.’ I couldn’t say no. We pulled ashore,

made a bonfire of one of their craft, and were setting fire to a second, when a deadly shower of small shot from the garrison scuttled our boat, killed our commanding officer with half of the crew, and the few who were left of us were made prisoners. It is of no use bothering you by telling how we escaped from a French prison. We did escape, and Tom once more fills his vacant chair.”

Should any of our readers wish farther acquaintance with our friends, all we can say is, the new year was still young when Adam Bell bestowed his daughter’s hand upon the heir of Marchlaw, and Peter beheld the once vacant chair again occupied, and a namesake of the third generation prattling on his knee.

COLKITTOCH.

THE name of Colkittoch often occurs in the history of the great rebellion in the reign of Charles I. By some he is denominated Macdonald of Colkittoch, by others Colkittoch, and by many he is confounded with his son. His name was Coll, or Colle, Macdonald : he was a native of Ireland. His father was Archibald Macdonell, who was an illegitimate son of the Earl of Antrim. With the aid of his partisans, Coll took violent possession of the island of Colon-say, one of the Hebrides, having driven away the Macfees, who had held it for many centuries. Coll was denominated Kittoch, or, more correctly, Ciotach, from his being left-handed. Coll had distinguished himself in the unhappy disturbances in Ireland, and when Lord Antrim sent troops to Scotland as auxiliaries in the royal cause, he served as an officer under his own son, Allister, or Alexander, who had the chief command of the corps. The father and

son were well qualified for this service, both of them being well known in the Highlands, and connected by blood or marriage with some of the best families in that country.

Coll was noted for his strength and prowess, though tainted with the cruelty too familiar to his countrymen at that time. He fought in all the battles in which the Irish auxiliaries were engaged under Montrose ; he was also concerned in their plundering expeditions in Argyleshire, where private revenge was unfortunately added to the horrors of war. Many of the lyric compositions of those days extol his bravery and his bloody vengeance on his antagonists, the Campbells, though it seems he was on very friendly terms with some of that name.

Coll had possession of the Castle of Duntroon, and having placed a garrison in it, he went to another quarter ; but in his absence it was taken by strata-

gem. He was ignorant of this misfortune, and on his return he steered his boat direct for the castle. His own piper was then a prisoner there; and knowing his master's boat, to warn him of his danger, he played a tune which he composed for the purpose; and so accurately did the sound correspond with the meaning, that Coll understood the intention, and avoided the castle.

After the defeat of Montrose at Philiphaugh, and the retreat of his son Alexander to Ireland, Coll was left in command of the castle of Dunaovaig, the ancient seat of the Macdonalds of Islay. The garrison consisted of 150 men; but the pipes which conveyed the water being cut by the enemy, on the assurance of Sir David Leslie, who commanded the parliamentary forces, Coll was induced to go out of the castle to hold parley with his old friend Campbell of Dunstaffnage. Leslie basely broke his word, and made Coll prisoner. The Marquis of Argyle was present on the occasion, and was blamed for this. After the Restoration, when Argyle was brought to trial, he was accused of the heinous crime of having ordered this garrison to be put on a rock, surrounded by the sea, to perish without food or water. He denied all knowledge of any such thing; and the proof on this point does not appear satisfactory, nor could we find any tradition in that country of such an atrocious action.

Coll was committed to the custody of the captain of Dunstaffnage, in whose castle he was confined, and the tower where he lay is still named after him. That gentleman being no doubt sensible of the dishonourable treatment his prisoner had received, gave him every possible indulgence. He permitted Coll to walk about the place, but he had cause to repent his lenity. The

Marquis of Argyle charged him with misconduct; and dreading the well-known severity of his chief, Dunstaffnage denied it. Argyle swore that if Coll should be found at large, the captain would be severely punished, and a messenger was despatched to ascertain the fact. Dunstaffnage being at Inveraray at the time, ordered his foster-brother to set off with all speed, and outrun the other, which he did; and on coming in sight of the castle, he cried out, "Coll in irons! Coll in irons!" Coll was occupied in superintending the shearing of corn at the time, and was the first who heard the cries. Conjecturing what the cause might be, he instantly retired to his dungeon, and with his own hands put on the irons. He was soon after this brought to trial before the sheriff of Argyle, in the castle where he was confined. Maclean of Ardgour, who originally had been on the royal side, was one of the jury; and wishing to display his zeal for the republican cause, which, with many others, he then espoused, asked Coll if he had been present at the battle of Inverlochy; the prisoner boldly replied, "By my baptism! I was so, carle, and did more service there than thyself." He was condemned to die, and was executed, by hanging from the mast of his own boat, laid across the cleft of a rock.* He suffered death without dismay, requesting that his body might be laid so near that of his friend, the captain of Dunstaffnage, that they might exchange snuff-boxes in their graves; and this request was complied with. The fate of Collkittoch was amply avenged: at the Restoration, his death and sufferings formed some of the most serious and fatal charges against the Marquis of Argyle.—"Traditions of the Western Highlands," in the London Literary Gazette.

* Coll's execution took place in 1647.

THE COVENANTERS:

A TRADITIONARY TALE OF LANARKSHIRE.

BY ROBERT MACNISH, LL.D.

CHAPTER I.

DURING the persecutions in Scotland, consequent upon the fruitless attempt to root out Presbyterianism and establish Episcopacy by force, there lived one Allan Hamilton, a farmer, at the foot of the Lowther mountains in Lanarkshire. His house was situated in a remote valley, which, though of small extent, was beautiful and romantic, being embosomed on all sides by hills covered to their summits with rich verdure. Around the house was a considerable piece of arable ground, and behind it a well-stocked orchard and garden. A few tall trees grew in front, waving their ample foliage over the roof, while at each side of the door was a little plot planted with honeysuckle, wallflower, and various odoriferous shrubs. The owner of this neat mansion was a fortunate man ; for the world had hitherto gone well with him, and if he had lost his wife—an affliction which sixteen years had mellowed over—he was blessed with an affectionate and virtuous daughter. He had two male and as many female servants to assist him in his farming operations ; and so well had his industry been rewarded, that he might be considered as one of the most prosperous husbandmen in that part of the country.

Mary Hamilton, his only child, was, at the time we speak of, nineteen years of age. She was an extremely handsome girl, and, though living in so remote a quarter, the whole district of the Lowthers rung with the fame of her beauty. But this was the least of her qualifications, for her mind was even fairer than her person ; and on her pure

spirit the impress of virtue and affection was stamped in legible characters.

Allan, though a religious man, was not an enthusiast ; and, from certain prudent considerations, had forborne to show any of that ardent zeal for the faith which distinguished many of his countrymen. He approved secretly in his heart of the measures adopted by the Covenanters, and inwardly prayed for their success ; but these matters he kept to his own mind, reading his Bible with his daughter at home, and not exposing himself or her to the machinations of the persecuting party.

It was on an August evening that he and his daughter were seated together in their little parlour. He had performed all his daily labours, and had permitted his servants to go to some rural meeting several miles off. Being thus left undisturbed, he enjoyed with her that quiet rest so grateful after a day spent in toil. The day had been remarkably beautiful ; but towards nightfall, the heavens were overcast with dark clouds, and the sun had that sultry glare which is so often the forerunner of a tempest. When this luminary disappeared beneath the mountains, he left a red and glowing twilight behind him ; and over the firmament a tissue of crimson clouds was extended, mingled here and there with black vapours. The atmosphere was hot, sickening, and oppressive, and seemed to teem with some approaching convulsion.

"We shall have a storm to-night," Allan remarked to his daughter. "I wish that I had not let the servants out ; they will be overtaken in it to a certainty as they cross the moors."

~~Centralia.~~

Maude Eva, infant daughter of conductor A. W. Lierman, died at 9:30 o'clock Wednesday evening, of cholera-infantum. The funeral will take place from the residence, 201 West Columbia avenue, on Friday afternoon at two o'clock, Rev. H. H. Bawden, officiating.

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"There is no fear of them, father," replied Mary; "they know the road well; at any rate, the tempest will be over before they think of stirring from where they are."

Allan did not make any answer, but continued looking through the window opposite to which he was placed. He could see from it the mountain of Lowther, the highest in Lanarkshire; its huge shoulders and top were distinctly visible, standing forth in grand relief from the red clouds above and behind it. The last rays of the sun, bursting from the rim of the horizon, still lingered upon the hill, and, casting over its western side a broad and luminous glare, gave to it the appearance of a burnished pyramid towering from the earth. This gorgeous vision, however, did not continue long. In a few minutes the mountain lost its ruddy tint, and the sky around it became obscurer. Shortly afterwards a huge sable cloud was observed hovering over its summit. "Look, Mary," cried Allan to his daughter, "did you ever see anything grander than this? Look at yon black cloud that hangs over Lowther." Mary did so, and saw the same thing as was remarked by her father. The cloud came down slowly and majestically, enveloped the summit of the mountain, and descended for some way upon its sides. At last, when it had fairly settled, confirming, as it were, its dismal empire, a flash of fire was seen suddenly to issue from the midst of it. It revealed, for an instant, the summit of Lowther; then vanishing with meteor-like rapidity, left everything in the former state of gloom. Mary clung with alarm to her father. "Hush, my dear," said Allan, pressing her closely to him, "and you will hear the thunder." He had scarcely pronounced the word when a clap was heard, so loud that the summit of the mountain appeared to be rent in twain. The terrific sound continued some time, for the neighbouring

hills caught it up and re-echoed it to each other, till it died away in the distance. A succession of flashes and peals from different quarters succeeded, and, in a short time, a deluge of rain poured down with the utmost violence.

The two inmates did not hear this noise without alarm. The rain beat loudly upon the windows, while, every now and then, fearful peals of thunder burst overhead. Without, no object was visible: darkness alone prevailed, varied at intervals with fierce glares of lightning. Thereafter gusts of wind began to sweep with tumult through the glen; and the stream which flowed past the house was evidently swollen, from the increased noise of its current rushing impetuously on.

The tempest continued to rage with unabated violence, when a knock was heard at the door. Allan opened it, expecting to find his domestics; but to his astonishment and dismay he beheld the Rev. Thomas Hervey, one of the most famous preachers of the Covenant. He was a venerable old man, and seemed overcome with fatigue and want, for he was pale and drooping, while his thin garments were drenched with rain. Now, though Allan Hamilton would yield to no man in benevolence, he never, on any occasion, felt so disposed, as at present, to outrage his own feelings, and cast aside the godlike virtue of charity. Mr Hervey, like many other good men, was proscribed by the ruling powers; and persecution then ran so high, that to grant him a night's lodging amounted to a capital crime. Many persons had already been shot for affording this slight charity to the outlawed Covenanters: Allan himself had been an unwilling witness of this dreadful fact. It was not, therefore, with his usual alacrity that he welcomed in the way-worn stranger. On the contrary, he held the door half-shut, and in a tone of embarrassment asked him what he wanted.

"I see, Mr Hamilton," said the minister, calmly, "that you do not wish I should cross your threshold. You ask me what I want. Is that Christian? What can any one want in a night like this, but lodgment and protection? If you grant it to me, I shall pray for you and yours; if you refuse it, I can only shake the dust off my feet and depart, albeit it be to death."

"Mr Hervey," said Allan, "you know your situation, and you know mine. I would be loth to treat the meanest thing that breathes as I have now treated you; but you are an outlawed man, and a lodging for one night under my roof is as much as my life is worth. Was it not last month I saw one of my nearest neighbours cruelly slain for doing a less thing,—even for giving a morsel of bread to one of your brethren? Mr Hervey, I repeat it, and with sorrow, that you know my situation, and that for the sake of my poor daughter and myself I have no alternative."

"Yes, I know your situation," answered the preacher, drawing himself up indignantly. "You are one of those faint-hearted believers who, for the sake of ease and temporal gain, have deserted that glorious cause for which your fathers have struggled. You are one of those who can stand by coolly and see others fight the good fight; and when they have overcome, you will doubtless enjoy the blessed fruits of their combating. You held back in the time of need: you have abetted prelacy and persecution, in so far as you have not set your shoulder to the wheel of the Covenant. Now, when a humble forwarder of that holy cause craves from you an hour of shelter, you stand with your door well-nigh closed, and refuse him admittance. I leave God to judge of your iniquity, and I quit your inhospitable and unchristian mansion."

He was moving off when Mary Hamilton, who had listened with a beating

heart to this colloquy, rushed forward and caught him by the arm. Her beautiful eyes were wet with tears, and she looked at her parent with an expression in which entreaty and upbraiding were mingled together. "You will not turn out this poor old man, father? Indeed you will not. You were only jesting. Come in, Mr Hervey; my father did not mean what he said;"—and she led him in by the hand, pushing gently back Allan, who still stood by the door. "Now, Mr Hervey, sit down there and dry yourself; and, father, shut the door."

"Thank you, my fair maiden," said the minister. "The Lord, for this good deed, will aid you in your distresses. You have shown that the old may be taught by the young; and I pray that this lesson of charity, which you have given to your father, may not turn out to your scaith or his."

Allan said nothing; he felt that the part he had acted was hardly a generous one, although perhaps justified by the stern necessity of the times. His heart was naturally benevolent, and in the consciousness of self-reproach every dread of danger was obliterated.

The first attention of him and Mary was directed to their guest. His garments having been thoroughly dried, food was placed before him, of which he partook, after returning thanks to God in a lengthened grace, for so disposing towards him the hearts of His creatures. When he had finished the repast, he raised his face slightly towards heaven, closed his eyes, and clasping his hands together, fervently implored the blessings of Providence on the father of that mansion and his child. When he had done this, he took a small Bible from his pocket, and read some of the most affecting passages of the Old Testament, descanting upon them as he went along: how God fed Elijah in the wilderness; how he conducted the Israelites through their forty

years of sojourn ; how Daniel, by faith, remained unhurt in the lion's den ; and how Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, walked through the fiery furnace, and not even their garments were touched by the flames. Allan and Mary listened with the most intense interest to the old man, whose voice became stronger, whose form seemed to dilate, and whose eyes were lit up with a sort of prophetic rapture, as he threw his spirit into those mysteries of Holy Writ.

After having concluded this part of his devotions, and before retiring to rest, he proposed that evening prayer should be offered up. Each accordingly knelt down, and he commenced in a strain of ardent and impassioned language. He deplored the afflicted state of God's kirk ; prayed that the hearts of those who still clung to it might be confirmed and made steadfast ; that confidence might be given to the wavering ; that those who from fear or worldly considerations had held off from the good cause, might be taught to see the error of their ways ; and that all back-sliders might be reclaimed, and become goodly members of the broken and distressed Covenant. "O Lord !" continued he, "Thou who hast watched over us in all time— who from Thy throne in the highest heaven hast vouchsafed to hearken to the prayer of Thy servants, Thou will not now abandon us in our need. We have worshipped Thee from the depths of the valley, and the rocks and hills of the desert have heard our voices calling upon Thy name. 'Where is your temple, ye outcast remnant ?' cry the scorners. We answer, O Lord, that we have no temple, but such as Thou hast created ; and yet from that tabernacle of the wilderness hast thou heard us, though storms walked around. We have trod the valley of the shadow of death, and yet Thou hast been a light in our path ; we have been chased like wild beasts through the land, yet Thy spirit hath not deserted us ; armed men

have encompassed us on all sides, threatening to destroy, yet our hearts have not failed ; neither has the prison nor the torture had power to make us abjure Thy most holy laws."

During the whole of his supplication, which he had poured forth with singular enthusiasm, the storm continued without, and distant peals of thunder were occasionally heard. This convulsion of the elements did not, however, distract his thoughts ; on the contrary, it rendered them more ardent ; and in apostrophising the tempest he frequently rose to a pitch of wild sublimity. Mary listened with deep awe. Her feelings, constitutionally warm and religious, were aroused, and she sobbed with emotion. Allan Hamilton, though not by nature a man of imagination, was also strongly affected ; he breathed hard, and occasionally a half-suppressed groan came from his breast. He could not help feeling deep remorse for the lukewarmness he had shown to the great cause then at stake.

The night, though fearfully tempestuous, did not prevent slumber from falling on the eyes of all. Each slept soundly, and the old minister, perhaps, more so than any. Many months had elapsed since he had stretched himself on such a couch as that which Mary Hamilton had prepared for him ; for he was a dweller in the desert, and had often lain upon the heath, with no other shelter than his plaid afforded. His slumbers, therefore, were delicious ; but they were not long, for no sooner had the morning light begun to peep through the window of his chamber than he was up and at his devotions. Allan, though an early riser, was still in bed, and not a little astonished when he heard his door open, and saw the old man walk softly up to his side.

"Hush ! Allan Hamilton, do not awaken the dear maiden, your daughter, in the next room. I have come to thank you and to bid you farewell. The

morning sun is up, and I may not tarry longer here, consistent with my own safety or yours. There are spies through all the country ; but peradventure I have escaped their observation.

I am going a few miles off near the Clyde, to meet sundry of my flock who are to assemble there. May God bless you, and send better times to this afflicted land !”

CHAPTER II.

WHEN Allan and his daughter sat down to their homely breakfast, the morning presented a pleasing contrast to the previous night. The sky was perfectly clear and serene. Every mountain sparkled, and the earth had a peculiar freshness diffused over its surface. The few clouds visible were at a great elevation, and were hurrying away, as if not to leave a stain on the transparent concave of heaven. There was little wind on the lower regions, scarcely sufficient to ruffle the surface of a slumbering lake. The dampness of the grass, the clay washed from the pebbles, and the rivulet swollen and turbid, were the only relics of the tempest. The weather continued beautifully serene, and when the sun was at its height, one of the finest days was presented that ever graced this most gorgeous month of the year.

It was about the middle of the day when Mary, who happened to look out, perceived six armed troopers approaching. They were on foot, their broad-swords hanging at their sides, and carbines swung over their shoulders. In addition to this, each had a couple of pistols stuck in his belt. As soon as she saw them she ran in to her father with manifest looks of alarm, and informed him of their approach. Allan could not help feeling uneasy at this intelligence ; for the military were then universally dreaded, and whenever a number were seen together, it was almost always on some errand of destruction. He went to the door ; but just as he reached it the soldiers were on the point of entering. The leader of this

body he recognised to be the ferocious Captain Clobberton, who had rendered himself universally infamous by his cruelties ; and who, it was reported, had in his career of persecution caused no less than seventeen persons to be put to death, in cold blood, without even the formality of a trial. He was one of the chief favourites of Dalzell, who used to call him his “lamb.” The man’s aspect did not belie his heart, for it was fierce, lowering, and cruel. His companions, with a single exception, seemed well suited to their leader, and fit instruments to carry his bloody mandates into execution. Allan, when he confronted this worthy agent of tyranny, turned back, followed by him and his crew into the house.

“ Shut the door, my dear chucks,” said Clobberton ; “ we must have some conversation with this godly man. So, Mr Hamilton, you have taken up with that pious remnant : you have turned a psalm-singer, eh ? Come, don’t stare at me as if you saw an owl ; answer my question—yes or no.” Allan looked at him with a steady eye. “ Captain Clobberton, you have asked me no question. I shall not scruple to answer anything which may be justly commanded of me.”

“ Answer me, then, sir,” continued the captain. “ Were you not present at the field-preaching near Lanark, when one of the king’s soldiers was slain, in attempting with several others to disperse it ?”

“ I was not,” answered Allan ; “ I never in my life attended a field-preaching.”

"Or a conventicle?"

"Nor a conventicle either."

"Do you mean to deny that you are one of that hypocritical set, who preach their absurd and treasonable jargon in defiance of the law? In a word, do you deny that you are one of the sworn members of the Covenant?"

"I do deny it, stoutly."

"Acknowledge it, and save your wretched life. Acknowledge it, or I will confront you with a proof which will perhaps astonish you, and cost you more than you are aware of."

"I will tell no untruth, even to save my life."

"Then on your own stupid head rest the consequences. Do you know one Hervey, a preacher?"

"I do," said Allan, firmly.

"Ha, here it comes! You have then spoken to that man, most godly Allan?"

"I have spoken to him."

"He has been in your house?"

"I do not mean to deny that he has."

"Has he not sung psalms in your house, and prayed in your house, and lodged in your house? Eh? And was it not last night that these doings were going on?"

"I will gainsay nothing of what you have said."

"Then Allan Hamilton," said the other, "I tell you plainly that you have harboured a traitor; and that unless you deliver him up, or tell where he may be found, I shall hold you guilty of treason, and punish you accordingly."

"The Lord's will be done," answered Hamilton, with a deep sigh. "What I did was an act of common charity. The old man applied to me in his distress; and it would have been cruel to have closed my door against him. Wreak your will upon me as it pleases you. Where he has gone I know not;

and though I did know, I should hardly consider myself justified in telling you."

"Then we shall make short work with you," rejoined Clobberton with an oath. "Ross, give him ten minutes to say his prayers, and then bind up his eyes. It is needless to palaver with him. We have other jobs of a like kind to manage to-day."

Here Mary, who stood in a corner listening with terrified heart, uttered a loud scream when she heard her father's doom pronounced. She rushed forth into the middle of the room, and fell upon her knees before Clobberton.

"Oh, captain, do not slay my father! Take *my* life. It was *my* fault alone that the old man was let into the house. My father refused to admit him. Take my life and save his. I shall be his murderer if he die—for I brought him into this trouble."

She continued some moments in this attitude, gazing up at him with looks of fear and entreaty, and clasping his knees. He had, however, been too long accustomed to scenes of this afflictive nature to be much moved; and he extricated himself from the unhappy girl with brutal rudeness. She fell speechless at his feet.

"Confound the wench! Was there ever seen the like of it? She takes me for one of your chicken-hearted milk-sops,—out of the way with the ninny."

He was about to lay rough hands upon her, when a trooper, stepping forward, raised her gently up and placed her on a seat. This was the only one of Clobberton's followers whose appearance was at all indicative of humanity. He was a handsome and strongly-built young man of six feet. His countenance was well formed; but its expression was rather dissolute, and rendered stern, apparently by the prevalence of some fierce internal passion. The marks of a generous heart were, notwithstanding,

ing, imprinted upon its bold outlines ; and whoever looked upon him could not help thinking that his natural disposition had been perverted by the wicked characters and scenes among which he was placed.

"Captain," said he, "I do not see the use of shooting this old fool. I begin to feel that we have had a surfeit of this work. Besides, if what the girl declares is correct, there is no great matter of treason in the case. At all events, I would vote to leave the business to the Justiciary."

"Graham," said Clobberton, eyeing him sternly, "give me none of your cursed whining palaver. What is your liver made of ? When there is anything in the way of justice to be done, you are as mealy and cream-faced as if you saw the devil. A fine fellow to wear the king's uniform ! If you say another word," added he, with a frightful oath, "I'll have you reported to the general !"

"Captain," said Graham, stepping modestly but firmly forward, "you may speak of me as you please—you are my officer—(though neither you nor any man of the regiment need be told that when my service was needed in real danger, I was never behind); but I cannot stand by unmoved and see downright butchery. If you have anything to urge against this man, let him be brought to Edinburgh, and there tried by the commission, which will punish him severely enough, in all conscience, if he be really guilty. I have assisted in some of these murders ; but my conscience tells me that I have done wrong ; and whatever the consequences be, I shall assist at them no more."

"Ay," said Clobberton, "you are a pretty dainty fellow—fitter to strut about in regimentals before wenches than behave like a man ; but, Mr John Graham, let me tell you that your eloquence, instead of retarding, has hastened the fate of this rascally traitor.

And, let me tell you farther, that on my arrival at head-quarters, I shall have you arraigned for mutiny and disobedience of orders. Ross, blindfold Hamilton and lead him out."

His command was instantly executed ; while Mary, in a fit of distraction, flew up to her father, cast her arms round his neck, and kissed him with the most heart-rending affliction.

"My father, my father, I am your murderer ! I will die with you ! Ye cruel-hearted men, will none of you save him from this bloody death ?"

"My dear Mary, may God protect you, and send you a happier lot than mine," was all that the unhappy parent could articulate. He was then torn from her with violence, and hurried out to the green before the house. Mary, on this separation, fell into a short swoon ; on awakening from which she found herself in the chamber with no one except Graham. His face was flushed with anger, and he walked impatiently up and down. By a sudden impulse she ran to the window, and the first sight which caught her eye was her father kneeling down, and opposite to him the four troopers, seemingly waiting for the signal of Clobberton, who looked intently at his watch. At this terrifying spectacle, and in an agony of desperation, she threw herself on her knees before the soldier.

"Young man—young man, save my father's life ! Oh, try at least to save him. I will love you, and work for you, and be your slave for ever. Blessings on your kind heart, you will do it—yes, you will do it." And she rose up and threw her arms round his neck, and kissed him on the cheek. A tear rolled from Graham's manly eye, and his soul was moved with compassion for the lovely being who clung to him and implored him so feelingly. He turned an instant to the window.

"Let me go, my dear—the accursed miscreant is putting up his watch and

has told them to present ; there is not a second to lose."

Without saying another word, he unslung his carbine, rushed to the open air—and shot Clobberton dead on the spot.

The troopers were confounded at this sudden action. They lowered the weapons which they had that instant raised to their shoulders, and stood for some time gazing confusedly at each other—then at Graham—then at the body of their captain. When they recovered their self-possession, they raised up the latter to see if any spark of life remained. He was perfectly dead. The following colloquy then ensued between them.

Russell.—Why, I thinks as how he be dead.

Smith.—Dead ! ay, as dead as Julius Caesar. I wonder what old Dalzell will say when he hears of his dear "lamb" being butchered thus ?

Russell.—Now hang it, Smith, don't speak ill of the captain. He was a worthy man—that is to say, after his own fashion ; and no one ever served his country better in the way of ridding it of crop-eared preachers : he was worth a score of hangmen.

Ross.—Gentlemen, there is no occasion to stand jesting and talking nonsense. Here is as pretty a piece of murder as ever was committed ; and it remains for us to decide what we will do, first with the traitor, Hamilton, and secondly with the murderer, Graham.

Graham.—Whatever you do with me, I hope you will not harm that poor man. Let him go ; and thus do a charitable action for once in your lives.

Russell.—I always, do you see, gentlemen, goes with the majority. Hang it, shoot or not is all one to Dick Russell. If you make up your minds to let him go scot-free, why, I se not oppose it.

Jones.—Well, well, let him go and sing psalms in his own canting fashion.

The fact is, these men were getting sick of shedding innocent blood, and although ready to spill more on being ordered, rather shunned it than otherwise—especially when their victims were unresisting.

"I see, comrades, you are agreed to let the old fool go unharmed," said Ross. Then walking up to Allan, who still knelt—his daughter with her arms around him, awaiting in terrible suspense the result of their deliberation, "Get up," said he, "and bless your stars ; but take care in future of your treasonable Covenanting tricks under the cloak of charity. It is not every day you will get a young fellow to shoot your executioner and save your life. As for you, Graham," turning to his companion, "I hold you prisoner. You must accompany us to head-quarters, and there take your trial for this business. You have committed a black murder on the body of your officer ; and if we failed to bring you up, old Dalzell would have us shot like so many pyets the minute after."

Graham's carbine and pistols were immediately taken from him, and his hands tied behind his back by the remaining troopers.

"Farewell, young woman," said he to Mary, who looked at him with tears of gratitude, "farewell ! I have saved your father's life and forfeited my own : don't forget Jack Graham."

The unfortunate girl was distracted at this heartrending sight ; and she rushed forward to entreat his guards to give him liberty. One of them presented his carbine at her—

"Off, mistress ; blast my heart, if it were not for your pretty face, I would send an ounce of cold lead through you. What the devil—haven't we spared your father's life, and you would have us connive at the escape of a murderer, to the risk of our own necks !"

"Do not distress yourself about me, my sweet girl," cried Graham—"farewell once more!"

And she turned back weeping, while the troopers held their way towards the western outlet of the valley.

CHAPTER III.

MARY was too generous to be happy in the safety of her father, when that was bought with the life of his brave deliverer. When Graham was taken away, she felt a pang as if he had been led to execution. Instead, therefore, of indulging in selfish congratulation, her whole soul was taken up in the romantic and apparently hopeless scheme of extricating him from his danger. There was not a moment to lose; and she asked her father if he could think of any way in which a rescue might be attempted.

"Mary, my dear, I know of none," was his answer. "We live far from any house, and before assistance could be procured, they would be miles beyond our reach."

"Yes, father, there is a chance," said she, with impatience. "Gallop over to Allister Wilson's on the other side of the hills. He is a strong and determined man, and, as well as some of his near neighbours, is accustomed to contest. You know he fought desperately at Drumclog; and though he blamed you for not joining the cause, he will not be loth to assist in this bitter extremity."

Allan, at these words, started up as if awakened from a reverie. "That will do, my dear bairn. I never thought of it; but your understanding is quicker than mine. I shall get out the horse; follow me on foot, as hard as you can."

This was the work of a minute. The horse was brought from the stable, and Allan lashed him to his full speed across the moor. Most fortunately he arrived at Allister's house as the latter was on the point of leaving it. He carried a musket over his shoulder, and a huge

claymore hung down from a belt girded round his loins.

"You have just come in time," said this stern son of the Covenant, after Allan had briefly related to him what had happened. "I am on my way to hear that precious saint, Mr Hervey, hold forth. You see I am armed to defend myself against temporal foes, and so are many others of my friends and brethren in God, who will be present on that blessed occasion. Come away, Allan Hamilton, you are one of the timid and faint-hearted flock of Jacob, but we will aid you as you wish, and peradventure save the young man who has done you such a good turn."

They went on swiftly to a retired spot at the distance of half a mile; it was a small glen nearly surrounded with rocks. There they beheld the Reverend Mr Hervey standing upon a mound of earth, and preaching to a congregation, the greater part of the males of which were armed with muskets, swords, or pikes; they formed, as it were, the outworks of the assembly,—the women, old men, and children being placed in the centre. These were a few of the devoted Christians who, from the rocks and caves of their native land, sent up their fearless voices to heaven—who, disowning the spiritual authority of a tyrannic government, thought it nowise unbecoming or treasonable to oppose the strong arm of lawless power with its own weapons; and who finally triumphed in the glorious contest, establishing that pure religion, for which posterity has proved, alas, too ungrateful!

In the pressing urgency of the case, Allister did not scruple to go up to the

minister, in the midst of his discourse. Such interruptions indeed were common in these distracted times, when it was necessary to skulk from place to place, and perform divine worship as if it was an act of treason against the state. Mr Hervey made known to his flock in a few words what had been communicated to him, taking care to applaud highly the scheme proposed by Wilson. There was no time to be lost, and under the guidance of Allister the whole of the assemblage hurried to a gorge of the mountains through which the troopers must necessarily pass. As the route of the latter was circuitous, time was allowed to this sagacious leader to arrange his forces. This he did by placing all the armed men—about twenty-five in number—in two lines across the pass. Those who were not armed, together with the women and children, were sent to the rear. When, therefore, the soldiers came up, they found to their surprise a formidable body ready to dispute the passage.

"What means this interruption?" said Ross, who acted the part of spokesman to the rest. Whereupon Mr Hervey advanced in front—"Release," said he, "that young man whom ye have in bonds."

"Release him!" replied Ross. "Would you have us release a murderer? Are you aware that he has shot his officer?"

"I am aware of it," Mr Hervey answered, "and I blame him not for the deed. Stand forth, Allan Hamilton, and say if that is the soldier who saved your life; and you, Mary Hamilton, stand forth likewise."

Both, to the astonishment of the soldiers, came in front of the crowd. "That," said Allan, "is the man, and may God bless him for his humanity."—"It is the same," cried his daughter; "I saw him with these eyes shoot the cruel Clobberton. On my knees I begged him to sue for mercy, and his kind

heart had pity upon me, and saved my father."

"Soldiers," said Mr Hervey, "I have nothing more to say to you. That young man has slain your captain, but he has done no murder. His deed was justifiable: yea, it was praiseworthy, in so far as it saved an upright man, and rid the earth of a cruel persecutor. Deliver him up, and go away in peace, or peradventure ye may fare ill among these armed men who stand before you."

The troopers consulted together for a short time, till, seeing that resistance would be utter madness against such odds, they reluctantly let go their prisoner. The first person who came up to him was Mary Hamilton. She loosened the cords that tied him, and presented him with conscious pride to those of her own sex who were assembled round.

"Good bye, Graham," cried Ross, with a sneer;—"you have bit us once, but it will puzzle you to do so again. We shall soon 'harry' you and your puritanical friends from your strongholds. An ell of strong hemp is in readiness for you at the Grassmarket o' Edinburgh. Take my defiance for a knave, as you are," added he, with an imprecation.

He had scarcely pronounced the last sentence when Graham unsheathed the weapon which hung at his side, sprang from the middle of the crowd, and stood before his defier. "Ross, you have challenged me, and you shall abide it—draw!" Here there was an instantaneous movement among the Covenanters, who rushed in between the two fierce soldiers, who stood with their naked weapons, their eyes glancing fire at each other. Mary Hamilton screamed aloud with terror, and cries of "separate them!" were heard from all the women. Mr Hervey came forward and entreated them to put up their swords, and he was seconded by most of the old men; but

all entreaties were in vain. They stood fronting each other, and only waiting for free ground to commence their desperate game.

"Let me alone," said Graham, furiously, to some who were attempting to draw him back; "am I to be bearded to my teeth by that swaggering ruffian?"

"Come on, my sweet cock of the Covenant," cries Ross, with the most insulting derision, "you or any one of your canting crew—or a dozen of you, one after the other."

"Let Graham go," was heard from the deep stern voice of Allister Wilson; "let him go, or I will meet that man with my own weapon. Mr Hervey, your advice is dear to us all, and well do we know that the blood of God's creatures must not be shed in vain; but has not that man of blood openly defied us, and shall we hinder our champion from going forward to meet him? No; let them join in combat and try which is the better cause. If the challenger overcomes, we shall do him no harm, but let him depart in peace: if he be overcome, let him rue the consequences of his insolence."

This proposition, though violently opposed by the women and the aged part of the crowd, met the entire approbation of the young men. Each felt himself personally insulted, and allowed, for a time, the turbulent passions of his nature to get the better of every milder feeling. A space of ground was immediately cleared for the combat, the friends of Ross being allowed to arrange matters as they thought fit. They went about it with a coolness and precision which showed that to them this sort of pastime was nothing new. "All is right—fall on," was their cry, and in a moment the combatants met in the arena. The three troopers looked on with characteristic *sang froid*, but it was otherwise with the rest of the bystanders, who gazed upon the scene with the most intense interest. Some of the

females turned away their eyes from it, and among them Mary Hamilton, who almost sank to the earth, and was with difficulty supported by her father.

The combat was desperate, for the men were of powerful strength, and of tried courage and skill in their weapons. The blows were parried for some time on both sides with consummate address, and neither could be said to have the advantage. At length, after contending fiercely, Ross exhibited signs of exhaustion—neither guarding himself nor assaulting his opponent so vigorously as at first. Graham, on noticing this, redoubled his efforts. He acted now wholly on the offensive, sending blow upon blow with the rapidity of lightning. His last and most desperate stroke was made at the head of his enemy. The sword of the latter, which was held up in a masterly manner to receive it, was beat down by Graham's weapon, which descended forcibly upon his helmet. The blow proved decisive, and Ross fell senseless upon the ground. His conqueror immediately wrested the weapon from him, while a shout was set up by the crowd in token of victory. The troopers looked mortified at this result of the duel, which was by them evidently unexpected. Their first care was to raise up their fellow comrade. On examination, no wound was perceived upon his head. His helmet had been penetrated by the sword, which, however, did not go further. His own weapon had contributed to deaden the blow, by partially arresting that of Graham in its furious descent. It was this only which saved his life. In a few minutes he so far recovered as to get up and look around him. The first object which struck him was his opponent standing in the ring wiping his forehead.

"Well, Ross," said one of his companions, "I always took you to be the best swordsman in the regiment; but I think you have met your match."

"My match? confound me!" returned the vanquished man, "I thought I would have made minced meat of him. There, for three years, have I had the character of being one of the best men in the army at my weapon, and here is all this good name taken out of me in a trice. How mortifying—and to lose my good sword too!"

"Here is your sword, Ross, and keep it," said Graham. "You have behaved like a brave man; and I honour such a fellow, whether he be my friend or foe. Only don't go on with your insolent bragging—that is all the advice I have to give you; nor call any man a knave till you have good proof that he is so."

"Well, well, Graham," answered the other, "I retract what I said; I have a better opinion of you than I had ten minutes ago. Take care of old Dalzell—his "lambs" will be after you, and you had better keep out of the way. Take this advice in return for my weapon which you have given me back. It would, after all, be a pity to tuck up such a pretty fellow as you are; although I would care very little to see your long-faced acquaintances there dangling by their necks. Give us your hand for old fellowship, and shift your quarters as soon as you choose. Good bye." So saying, he and his three comrades departed.

After these doings, it was considered imprudent for the principal actors to remain longer in this quarter. Mr Hervey retired about twenty miles to the northward, in company with Allan Hamilton and his daughter, and Allister Wilson. Graham went by a circuitous route to Argyleshire, where he secreted himself so judiciously, that though the agents of government got information of his being in that country, they could never manage to lay hand upon him. These steps were prudent in all parties; for the very day after the rescue, a strong body of dragoons was sent to the Lowthers, to apprehend the

above named persons. They behaved with great cruelty, burning the cottages of numbers of the inhabitants, and destroying their cattle. They searched Allan Hamilton's house, took from it everything that could be easily carried away, and such of his cattle as were found on the premises. Among other things, they carried off the body of the sanguinary Clobberton, which they found on the spot where it had been left, and interred it in Lanark churchyard, with military honours. None of the individuals, however, whom they sought for were found.

For a short time after this, the persecution raged with great violence in the south of Lanarkshire; but happier days were beginning to dawn; and the arrival of King William, and the de-thronement of the bigoted James, put an end to such scenes of cruelty. When these events occurred, the persecuted came forth from their hiding-places. Mr Hervey, among others, returned to the Lowthers, and enjoyed many happy days in this seat of his ministry and trials. Allan and his daughter were among the first to make their appearance. Their house soon recovered its former comfort; and in the course of time every worldly concern went well with them. Mary, however, for a month or more after their return, did not feel entirely satisfied. She was duller than was her wont, and neither she nor her father could give any explanation why it should be so. At this time a tall young man paid them a visit, and, strange to say, she became perfectly happy. This visitor was no other than the wild fighting fellow Graham,—now perfectly reformed from his former evil courses, by separation from his profligate companions, and by the better company and principles with which his late troubles had brought him acquainted.

A few words more will end our story. This bold trooper and the beautiful daughter of Allan Hamilton were seen

five weeks thereafter going to church as man and wife. It was allowed that they were the handsomest couple ever seen in the Lowthers. Graham proved a kind husband ; and it is hardly necessary to say that Mary was a most affectionate and exemplary wife. Allan Hamilton attained a happy old age, and saw his grandchildren ripening into

fair promise around him. His daughter, many years after his death, used to repeat to them the story of his danger and escape, which we have here imperfectly related. The tale is not fictitious. It is handed down in tradition over the upper and middle wards of Lanarkshire, and with a consistency which leaves no doubt of its truth.

THE POOR SCHOLAR.

BY PROFESSOR WILSON.

THE vernal weather, that had come so early in the year as to induce a fear that it would not be lasting, seemed, contrary to that foreboding of change, to become every day more mild and genial, and the spirit of beauty, that had at first ventured out over the bosom of the earth with timid footsteps, was now blending itself more boldly with the deep verdure of the ground, and the life of the budding trees. Something in the air, and in the great wide blue bending arch of the unclouded sky, called upon the heart to come forth from the seclusion of parlour or study, and partake of the cheerfulness of nature.

We had made some short excursions together up the lonely glens, and over the moors, and also through the more thickly inhabited field-farms of his parish, and now the old minister proposed that we should pay a visit to a solitary hut near the head of a dell, which, although not very remote from the manse, we had not yet seen ; and I was anxious that we should do so, as, from his conversation, I understood that we should see there a family—if so a widow and her one son could be called—that would repay us by the interest we could not fail to feel in their character,

for the time and toil spent on reaching their secluded and guarded dwelling.

"The poor widow woman," said the minister, "who lives in the hut called Braehead, has as noble a soul as ever tenanted a human bosom. One earthly hope alone has she now—but I fear it never will be fulfilled. She is the widow of a common cottar, who lived and died in the hut which she and her son now inhabit. Her husband was a man of little education, but intelligent, even ingenious, simple, laborious, and pious. His duties lay all within a narrow circle, and his temptations, it may be said, were few. Such as they were, he discharged the one and withstood the other. Nor is there any reason to think that, had they both been greater, he would have been found wanting. He was contented with meal and water all his days, and so fond of work that he seemed to love the summer chiefly for the length of its labouring days. He had a slight genius for mechanics ; and during the long winter evenings he made many articles of curious workmanship, the sale of which added a little to the earnings of his severer toil. The same love of industry excited him from morning to night ; but he had also stronger, tenderer,

and dearer motives ; for if his wife and their one pretty boy should outlive him, he hoped that, though left poor, they would not be left in penury, but enabled to lead, without any additional hardships, the usual life, at least, of the widow and the orphans of honest hard-working men. Few thought much about Abraham Blane while he lived, except that he was an industrious and blameless man ; but, on his death, it was felt that there had been something far more valuable in his character ; and now, I myself, who knew him well, was pleasingly surprised to know that he had left his widow and boy a small independence. Then the memory of his long summer days, and long winter nights, all ceaselessly employed in some kind of manual labour, dignified the lowly and steadfast virtue of the unpretending and conscientious man.

"The widow of this humble-hearted and simple-minded man, whom we shall this forenoon visit, you will remember, perhaps,—although then neither she nor her husband were much known in the parish,—as the wife of the basket-maker. Her father had been a clergyman—but his stipend was one of the smallest in Scotland, and he died in extreme poverty. This, his only daughter, who had many fine feelings and deep thoughts in her young innocent and simple heart, was forced to become a menial servant in a farmhouse. There, subduing her heart to her situation, she married that inoffensive and good man ; and all her life has been—maid, wife, and widow—the humblest among the humble. But you shall soon have an opportunity of seeing, what sense, what feeling, what knowledge, and what piety, may all live together, without their owner suspecting them, in the soul of the lonely widow of a Scottish cottar ; for except that she is pious, she thinks not that she possesses any other treasure ; and even her piety she regards, like a true Christian, as a gift bestowed.

"But well worthy of esteem, and, to speak in the language of this world's fancies, of admiration, as you will think this poor solitary widow, perhaps you will think such feelings bestowed even more deservedly on her only son. He is now a boy only of sixteen years of age, but in my limited experience of life, never knew I such another. From his veriest infancy he showed a singular capacity for learning ; at seven years of age he could read, write, and was even an arithmetician. He seized upon books with the same avidity with which children in general seize upon playthings. He soon caught glimmerings of the meaning even of other languages ; and, before he was ten years old, there were in his mind clear dawning of the scholar, and indications not to be doubted of genius and intellectual power. His father was dead—but his mother, who was no common woman, however common her lot, saw with pure delight, and with strong maternal pride, that God had given her an extraordinary child to bless her solitary hut. She vowed to dedicate him to the ministry, and that all her husband had left should be spent upon him, to the last farthing, to qualify him to be a preacher of God's Word. Such ambition, if sometimes misplaced, is almost always necessarily honourable. Here it was justified by the excelling talents of the boy—by his zeal for knowledge, which was like a fever in his blood—and by a childish piety, of which the simple, and eloquent, and beautiful expression has more than once made me shed tears. But let us leave the manse, and walk to Braehead. The sunshine is precious at this early season ; let us enjoy it while it smiles!"

We crossed a few fields—a few coppice woods—an extensive sheep-pasture, and then found ourselves on the edge of a moorland. Keeping the shelving heather ridge of hills above us, we gently descended into a narrow rushy glen, without anything that could be

called a stream, but here and there crossed and intersected by various runlets. Soon all cultivation ceased, and no houses were to be seen. Had the glen been a long one, it would have seemed desolate, but on turning round a little green mount that ran almost across it, we saw at once an end to our walk, and one hut, with a peatstack close to it, and one or two elder, or, as we call them in Scotland, *bourtrie* bushes, at the low gable-end. A little smoke seemed to tinge the air over the roof uncertainly—but except in that, there was nothing to tell that the hut was inhabited. A few sheep lying near it, and a single cow of the small hill-breed, seemed to appertain to the hut, and a circular wall behind it apparently enclosed the garden. We sat down together on one of those large mossy stones that often lie among the smooth green pastoral hills, like the relics of some building utterly decayed—and my venerable friend, whose solemn voice was indeed pleasant in this quiet solitude, continued the simple history of the poor scholar.

"At school he soon outstripped all the other boys, but no desire of superiority over his companions seemed to actuate him—it was the pure native love of knowledge. Gentle as a lamb, but happy as a lark, the very wildest of them all loved Isaac Blane. He procured a Hebrew Bible and a Greek Testament, both of which he taught himself to read. It was more than affecting—it was sublime and awful to see the solitary boy sitting by himself on the braes shedding tears over the mysteries of the Christian faith. His mother's heart burned within her towards her son; and if it was pride, you will allow that it was pride of a divine origin. She appeared with him in the kirk every Sabbath, dressed not ostentatiously, but still in a way that showed she intended him not for a life of manual labour. Perhaps, at first, some half

thought that she was too proud of him; but that was a suggestion not to be cherished, for all acknowledged that he was sure to prove an honour to the parish in which he was born. She often brought him to the manse, and earth did not contain a happier creature than she, when her boy answered all my questions, and modestly made his own simple, yet wise remarks on the sacred subjects gradually unfolding before his understanding and his heart.

"Before he was twelve years of age he went to college; and his mother accompanied him to pass the winter in the city. Two small rooms she took near the cathedral; and while he was at the classes, or reading alone, she was not idle, but strove to make a small sum to help to defray their winter's expenses. To her that retired cell was a heaven when she looked upon her pious and studious boy. His genius was soon conspicuous; for four winters he pursued his studies in the university, returning always in summer to this hut, the door of which during their absence was closed. He made many friends, and frequently during the three last summers, visitors came to pass a day at Braehead, in a rank of life far above his own. But in Scotland, thank God, talent and learning, and genius and virtue, when found in the poorest hut, go not without their admiration and their reward. Young as he is, he has had pupils of his own—his mother's little property has not been lessened at this hour by his education; and besides contributing to the support of her and himself, he has brought neater furniture into that lonely hut, and there has he a library, limited in the number, but rich in the choice of books, such as contain food for years of silent thought to the poor scholar—if years indeed are to be his on earth."

We rose to proceed onwards to the hut, across one smooth level of greenest herbage, and up one intervening knowe, a little lower than the mount on which

it stood. Why, thought I, has the old man always spoken of the poor scholar as if he had been speaking of one now dead? Can it be, from the hints he has dropped, that this youth, so richly endowed, is under the doom of death, and the fountain of all those clear and fresh-gushing thoughts about to be sealed? I asked, as we walked along, if Isaac Blane seemed marked out to be one of those sweet flowers "no sooner blown than blasted," and who perish away like the creatures of a dream? The old man made answer that it was even so, that he had been unable to attend college last winter, and that it was to be feared he was now far advanced in a hopeless decline. "Simple is he still as a very child; but with a sublime sense of duty to God and man—of profound affection and humanity never to be appeased towards all the brethren of our race. Each month—each week—each day, has seemed visibly to bring him new stores of silent feeling and thought—and even now, boy as he is, he is fit for the ministry. But he has no hopes of living to that day—nor have I. The deep spirit of his piety is now blended with a sure prescience of an early death. Expect, therefore, to see him pale, emaciated, and sitting in the hut like a beautiful and blessed ghost."

We entered the hut, but no one was in the room. The clock ticked solitarily, and on a table, beside a nearly extinguished peat fire, lay the open Bible, and a small volume, which, on lifting it up, I found to be a Greek Testament.

"They have gone out to walk, or to sit down for an hour in the warm sunshine," said the old man. "Let us sit down and wait their return. It will not belong." A long, low sigh was heard in the silence, proceeding, as it seemed, from a small room adjoining that in which we were sitting, and of which the door was left half open. The minister looked into that room, and, after a long earnest gaze, stepped softly back to me

(6)

again, with a solemn face, and taking me by the hand, whispered to me to come with him to that door, which he gently moved. On a low bed lay the poor scholar, dressed as he had been for the day, stretched out in a stillness too motionless and profound for sleep, and with his fixed face up to heaven. We saw that he was dead. His mother was kneeling, with her face on the bed, and covered with both her hands. Then she lifted up her eyes and said, "O merciful Redeemer, who wrought that miracle on the child of the widow of Nain, comfort me—comfort me, in this my sore distress. I know that my son is never to rise again until the great judgment day. But not the less do I bless Thy holy name, for Thou didst die to save us sinners."

She arose from her knees, and, still blind to every other object, went up to his breast. "I thought thee lovelier, when alive, than any of the sons of the children of men, but that smile is beyond the power of a mother's heart to sustain." And, stooping down, she kissed his lips, and cheeks, and eyes, and forehead, with a hundred soft, streaming, and murmuring kisses, and then stood up in her solitary hut, alone and childless, with a long mortal sigh, in which all earthly feelings seemed breathed out, and all earthly ties broken. Her eyes wandered towards the door, and fixed themselves with a ghastly and unconscious gaze for a few moments on the gray locks and withered countenance of the holy old man, bent towards her with a pitying and benignant air, and stooped, too, in the posture of devotion. She soon recognised the best friend of her son, and leaving the bed on which his body lay, she came out into the room, and said, "You have come to me at a time when your presence was sorely needed. Had you been here but a few minutes sooner you would have seen my Isaac die!"

Unconsciously we were all seated;

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and the widow, turning fervently to her venerated friend, said, "He was reading the Bible—he felt faint—and said feebly, 'Mother, attend me to my bed, and when I lie down, put your arm over my breast and kiss me.' I did just as he told me; and, on wiping away a tear or two vainly shed by me on my dear boy's face, I saw that his eyes, though open, moved not, and that the lids were fixed. He had gone to another world. See—sir! there is the Bible lying open at the place he was reading—God preserve my soul from repining!—only a few, few minutes ago."

The minister took the Bible on his knees, and laying his right hand, without selection, on part of one of the pages that lay open, he read aloud the following verses :—

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."

The mother's heart seemed to be deeply blest for a while by these words. She gave a grateful smile to the old man, and sat silent, moving her lips. At length she again broke forth :—

"Oh! death, whatever may have been our thoughts or fears, ever comes unexpectedly at last. My son often—often told me, that he was dying, and I saw that it was so ever since Christmas. But how could I prevent hope from entering my heart? His sweet happy voice—the calmness of his prayers—his smiles that never left his face whenever he looked or spoke to me—his studies, still pursued as anxiously as ever—the interest he took in any little incident of our retired life—all forced me to believe at times that he was not destined to die. But why think on all these things now? Yes! I will always think of them, till I join him and my husband in heaven!"

It seemed now as if the widow had

only noticed me for the first time. Her soul had been so engrossed with its passion of grief, and with the felt sympathy and compassion of my venerable friend. She asked me if I had known her son; and I answered, that if I had, I could not have sat there so composedly; but that I was no stranger to his incomparable excellence, and felt indeed for her grievous loss. She listened to my words, but did not seem to hear them, and once more addressed the old man.

"He suffered much sickness, my poor boy. For although it was a consumption, that is not always an easy death. But as soon as the sickness and the racking pain gave way to our united prayers, God and our Saviour made us happy; and sure he spake then as never mortal spake, kindling into a happiness that was beautiful to see, when I beheld his face marked by dissolution, and knew, even in those inspired moments (for I can call them nothing else), that ere long the dust was to lie on those lips now flowing over with heavenly music!"

We sat for some hours in the widow's hut, and the minister several times prayed with her, at her own request. On rising to depart, he said that he would send up one of her dearest friends to pass the night with her, and help her to do the last offices to her son. But she replied that she wished to be left alone for that day and night, and would expect her friend in the morning. We went towards the outer door, and she, in a sort of sudden stupor, let us depart without any farewell words, and retired into the room where her son was lying. Casting back our eyes before our departure, we saw her steal into the bed beside the dead body, and drawing the head gently into her bosom, she lay down with him in her arms, and as if they had in that manner fallen asleep.

THE CRUSHED BONNET.

TOWARDS the close of a beautiful autumnal day in 18—, when pacing slowly on my way, and in a contemplative mood admiring the delightful scenery between Blair Athole and Dunkeld, on my return from a survey of the celebrated pass of Killiecrankie, and other places rendered famous in Scottish story, I was accosted by a female, little past the prime of life, but with two children of unequal age walking by her side, and a younger slung upon her back. The salutation was of the supplicatory kind, and while the tones were almost perfectly English, the pronunciation of the words was often highly Scottish. The words, a “sodger’s widow”—“three helpless bairns”—and “Waterloo,” broke my meditations with the force of an enchantment, excited my sympathy, and made me draw my purse. While in the act of tendering a piece of money—a cheap and easy mode of procuring the luxury of doing good—I thought the countenance, though browned and weather-beaten, one which I before had seen, without exactly recollecting when or where. My curiosity thus raised, many interrogatives and answers speedily followed, when at last I discovered that there stood before me Jeanie Strathavon, once the beauty and the pride of my own native village. Ten long and troublous years had passed away since Jeanie left the neighbourhood in which she was born to follow the spirit-stirring drum; and where she had gone, or how she had afterwards fared, many enquired, though but few could tell. The incident which led to all her subsequent toil and suffering seemed but trivial at the time, yet, like many other trivial occurrences, became to her one fraught with mighty consequences.

She was an only daughter, her father was an honest labourer, and though not nursed in the bosom of affluence, she

hardly knew what it was to have a wish ungratified. She possessed mental vivacity, and personal attractions, rarely exhibited, especially at the present day, by persons in her humble sphere of life. Though she never could boast what might properly be called education, yet great care had been taken to render her modest, affectionate, and pious. Her parents, now in the decline of life, looked upon her as their only solace. She had been from her very birth the idol of their hearts; and as there was no sunshine in their days but when she was healthy and happy, so their prospects were never clouded but when she was the reverse. Always the favourite of one sex, and the envy of another, when not yet out of her teens, she was importuned by the addresses of many both of her own rank and of a rank above her own, to change her mode of life. The attentions of the latter, in obedience to the suggestions of her affectionate but simple-hearted parents, she always discouraged, for they never would allow themselves to think that “folk wi’ siller would be looking after their bairn for ony gude end.” Among those of her own station, she could hardly be said to have yet shown a decided preference to any one, though the glances which she cast at Henry Williams, when passing through the kirkyard on Sundays, seemed to every one to say where, if she had her own unbiased will, her choice would light. Still she had never thought seriously upon the time when, nor the person for whom, she would leave her fond and doting parents. Chance or accident, however, in these matters, often outruns the speed of deliberate choice; at least such was the case with poor Jeanie.

Decked out one Sabbath morning in her best, to go to what Burns calls a “Holy Fair,” in the neighbouring

parish, though viewed in a far different light by her, Jeanie had on her brawest and her best ; and among other things, a fine new bonnet, which excited the gossip and the gaze of all the lasses in the village. Having sat for an hour or two at the tent, listening earnestly and devoutly to a discourse which formed a complete body of divinity, she, with many others, was at length obliged to take refuge in the church, to shun a heavy summer shower, which unexpectedly arrested the out-door devotions. Here, whether wearied with the long walk she had in the morning, or overpowered with the heat and suffocation consequent upon such a crowd, she began to feel a serious oppression of sickness, and before she could effect her escape she entirely fainted away, requiring to be carried out in a state of complete insensibility.

It was long before she came to herself ; and when she did, she found that the rough hands of those who had caught her when falling, and borne her through the crowd to the open air, had, amidst the anxiety for her recovery, treated her finery with but very little ceremony. Among other instances of this kind, she found that her bonnet had been hastily torn from her head, thrown carelessly aside, and, being accidentally trod upon, had been so crushed, as to render it perfectly useless. The grief which this caused made her forget the occasion which produced such disaster ; and adjusting herself as well as she could, she did not wait the conclusion of the solemn service, but sought her father's cottage amidst much sorrow and confusion.

When she reached home, she found her parents engaged in devotional reading, their usual mode of spending the Sabbath evenings. As it was not altogether with their consent that she had not accompanied them that day to their usual place of being instructed in divine things, the plight in which she returned to them

excited, especially on the mother's part, a hasty burst of displeasure, if not of anger ; and the calm improving peace of the evening was entirely broken. Sacred as to them the day appeared, they could not restrain inquiry as to the cause of her altered appearance, and maternal anxiety gave birth to suspicions which poor Jeanie's known veracity and simple unaffected narrative could not altogether repress. Thus, for the first time in her life, had Jeanie excited the frown of her parents, and every reproving look and word was as a dagger to her heart.

Night came, and she retired to rest, but her innocent breast was too much agitated to allow her eyes to close in sleep ; and the return of morning only brought with it an additional burden to her heart, by a renewed discussion of the events of the previous day. This was more than she was able to stand, and she took the first opportunity to escape from that roof where, till now, she had never known aught but delight, to go to pour her complaint into the ear of one who seemed to love her almost to distraction, —her youthful admirer, Henry Williams. Their interview, though not long, terminated in the proposal on his part to relieve her from her embarrassed situation by forthwith making her his own. Whether this was what she desired, in having recourse to such an adviser, cannot be known, but, at all events, she acceded with blamable facility to his wishes. She could not endure the thought of being without a friend, and she knew not that the friendship and affection of her parents had suffered no abatement, though their great concern for her innocence and welfare had pushed their reproofs further than they intended, or than prudence under such circumstances would warrant.

Henry was little more than her own age, of but moderate capacity, handsome in person, and ill provided with the means of making matrimony a state

of enjoyment ; and too much addicted to the frivolities of his years to be fitted for the serious business of being the head of a family. Youth and inexperience seldom consider consequences, and the desire of the one to receive, and of the other to afford relief, under existing circumstances, made them resolve neither to ask parental consent to their purpose, nor wait the ordinary steps prescribed by the Church. The connection was therefore no less irregular than it was precipitate, and Jeanie never so much as sought to see her father's house till the solemn knot was tied.

In her absence many inquiries were made respecting her by the villagers, who had witnessed or heard of what had happened to her on the previous day. Her truth and innocence being thus put beyond the shadow of a doubt, consternation at the long absence of their child, and compunction for the severity of their reproofs, drove the unhappy parents almost frantic. When the news of the re-appearance of their daughter dispelled their direful apprehensions as to her safety, though they felt a momentary gleam of joy, yet they experienced nothing like heartfelt satisfaction.

Jeanie made as sweet and loving a wife as she had been a daughter ; but the cares of providing for more than himself soon made Henry regret his rashness, and the prospect of these cares speedily increasing made him more and more dissatisfied with his new state of life. All Jeanie's care and anxiety to soothe and please him were unavailing. It is not in the power of beauty, youth, and innocence, to check and control the sallies of ignorance and caprice. Chagrined because his youthful wife had not prepared his morning meal to his liking, on a day when he was to visit a neighbouring city for some trifling purpose, he determined to free himself from the yoke into which he

had so heedlessly run, and returned home on the evening of the following day somewhat altered in dress and appearance, and with the king's money in his pocket. The grief and agony of Jeanie, and of her affectionate parents, were past all description ; and the consideration of her rashness and imprudence having been the occasion of so much distress to herself and others, rendered her almost desperate.

Henry was not long in the hands of the drill sergeant till he became nearly as penitent and full of regrets as his lovely young wife, and he willingly would, had he been permitted, have returned to a faithful discharge of the duties of a husband ; but the country was at that time in too great need of men such as Henry, to part with him either for money or interest. When he began to reap the bitter fruits of his own folly, his affection for Jeanie, if it ever deserved so sacred a name, returned with redoubled intensity ; and that object, for the abandonment of which he had plunged himself into the hardships of which he complained, he thought he could not now live without. He was shortly to be marched off to his regiment, and poor Jeanie, whose attachment remained unshaken amidst the severe treatment she had suffered, determined to follow him through all the casualties of the military life ; and at any rate preferred hardship to the disgrace which she thought she had brought upon herself by her own imprudence. She had at this time been a mother for little more than two months ; but even this could not change her resolution to follow the father of her child, exposed as she must be to all the privations and hardships of the soldier's wife. She saw her father and mother on the morning of her departure, but neither she nor they were able to exchange words, so full were their hearts ; save that the old man said, "God help and bless you, Jeanie !" Scarcely a dry eye

was to be seen in the village that morning, and a crowd of youths, amidst silent dejection, saw her far on her way, carrying her baby and her bundle by turns. The toils through which she passed in following her husband were too many and too severe to be here related. He was ultimately one of those who assisted to decide the dreadful conflict at Waterloo, and received a severe wound when the day was just about won. In a foreign hospital, though he suffered much, he at length recovered ;

but upon returning home, his wounds broke forth afresh, and at last carried him off. Jeanie was now left quite unfriended. She had seen her two eldest children laid in the dust, the one in a distant clime, and the other, though on British soil, yet far from the tomb of her fathers. She still had three surviving, and her parents being gone to their long home, her only resource at the time I met her was dependence on public charity.—“*The Athenæum*,”—*Glasgow University Annual, 1830.*

THE VILLAGERS OF AUCHINCRAIG.

BY DANIEL GORRIE.

IN one of the eastern counties of Scotland, there is a pleasant secluded valley, known by the name of Strathkirtle. It is well cultivated, growing good grain crops, abounding in rich pasture-land, and beautified by the water of Kirtle, which winds smoothly along between its fertile banks, and loses itself at last in the German Ocean. Strips and roundels of woodland, snug farm steadings, and the sheltering hills on either side, impart an air of peace and an aspect of comfort to this secluded Scottish strath, such as may rarely be witnessed in other countries. Spring nurses there her sweetest wild-flowers, on the meadows, in the woods, and by the water-courses ; summer comes early with choirs of singing-birds, and the voice of the cuckoo ; autumn adorns the fields with the mellowest beauty, and touches the green leaves into gold ; and winter ever spares some gladsome relics of the sister seasons, to cheer the hearts of the inhabitants at Strathkirtle.

In the centre of the valley, and close beside the stream, there formerly stood

the ancient village of Auchincraig ; but the progress of improvement has, I am told, almost swept its last vestiges away. It was, without exception, the oddest, old-fashioned place in which I ever resided for any length of time. The dwelling-houses were of all shapes and sizes, and they had been built, whether solitary, in rows, or in batches, in utter contempt of all order and regularity. One might almost have imagined that they had fallen down in dire confusion from the clouds, and been allowed to stand peaceably where they fell. Some had their gables to the street, some were planted back to back, some frowned front to front. The roofs of not a few rose in ridges like the back of a dromedary, while the appearance of others betokened a perilous collapse and sudden downfall. Auchincraig could boast of styles of architecture unknown to Grecian and Roman fame. The primitive builders had not been particular regarding the situation of the doors, and evidently considered windows as useless breaks in the walls. Houses two storeys high, with weather-worn

and weather-stained slate roofs, stood beside humbler dwellings, low and long, and covered with thatch. The parish church was situated in the burial ground at the east end of the village. It was an old edifice, with ivy-mantled spire, which seemed ready to sink down and mingle with the dust of the many generations who slept around. Jack-daws congregated on its summit, and swallows, unmolested, built their nests in all the windows of the hoary pile. The parish manse, which appeared scarcely less ancient than the church, stood about a stone's cast from the place of graves. Primeval trees hung their foliage over it in summer, shading its roof and windows from the sunrays, and groaned mournfully throughout all their bare bulk when the bitter blast of winter swept over the exposed church-yard. A beechen hedge encircled the manse and the garden attached. The residence of the minister was by far the pleasantest abode in Auchincraig.

Queer and old-fashioned as the village was, it was far surpassed in these respects by the villagers. I could scarcely have believed that it was possible to find so many odd characters and strange mortals collected together in one locality. Nothing astonished me more than the number of old people, male and female, who, "dauner'd" about the village streets, or sat dozing on three-legged stools at the doors of their dwellings. It seemed as if the promise, "Thou shalt live long upon the land," had been specially vouchsafed to them. The old men wore knee-breeches, home-made stockings, blue coats with metal buttons, and red Kilmarnocks; while the old women looked the very picture of sedate, sagacious, and decent eld, with their white coifs and black ribbons, and bone spectacles bestriding their attenuated noses. The village children had an "auld-farrant" appearance; and the young men and women, whose principal

employment was weaving and spinning, partook somewhat of the gravity of their elders with whom they associated so much. It was only at such festive seasons as Hallowe'en, Hansel Monday, and the annual summer Fair, that the natural hilarity of youth displayed itself in any remarkable degree.

One of the odd characters of this venerable village was the minister himself. He belonged to that quaint, homely class of Scottish rural pastors, the last remnants of which have now altogether vanished. A strange, eccentric old man was the Rev. Thomas Watson —more generally and familiarly known by the name of "Tammy"—parish minister of Auchincraig. He was a grayhaired man, but stout of body and ruddy of countenance, hale and hearty as an old farmer, and fond of his own creature comfort, while he imparted to others spiritual consolation. He was generally attired, at home and abroad, in a broad-brimmed hat, knee breeches, and a loose coat, cut in the shape of a jockey's jacket. He had a habit of screwing his face and shrugging his shoulders, both in the pulpit and out of it, when anything unpleasant occurred. It was amusing to see him engaged in conversation with one of his aged parishioners on the streets of the village. He applied vigorously to his snuff-box, and a hearty slap on the shoulder of his auditor was the inevitable prelude to a humorous remark. One day, while he was thus enjoying a "twa-handed crack" with an aged member of his congregation, he administered a heavier slap than was desirable, upon which the parishioner exclaimed, with more familiarity than reverence, "Tammy, Tammy! my banes are no made o' brass—dinna hit sae sair!" Tammy, notwithstanding his slapping propensities, was a great favourite amongst the people, and I have heard the villagers repeating with great glee some of his witty remarks, and telling

anecdotes regarding his eccentricities. He always addressed the people in broad Scotch from the pulpit. Indeed it is more than probable that they would have accused him of preaching heresy if he had ever attempted English. He felt himself as much at home, and said as homely things, in the church and before the congregation, as when sitting in social converse beside the manse hearth. Several instances of this I distinctly remember. One Sabbath forenoon, his own servant-girl entered the church rather late—in fact, the first psalm had been sung, and the Rev. Thomas was in the midst of his lengthy opening prayer. Janet, flurried no doubt by disturbing the devotions of the congregation, omitted to shut the door behind her, and a breeze blew up the passage and waved the gray locks of the minister. This was more than the reverend gentleman could endure. He opened his eyes, saw the culprit, and said with his own broad peculiar accent, “Janet, woman, Janet! can ye no steek the door ahint ye, an’ keep the wund oot!” Ludicrous as this remark might have appeared in the circumstances to a stranger, it was listened to by his hearers as devoutly as if it had been an ordinary part of the service.

On another occasion “Tammy” was holding an evening diet of worship in the church. This, it must be confessed, was with him a rare event indeed. It was the winter season, and, at the close of the first devotional exercise, the candles were emitting a light faint, and feeble as that of the wanling crescent-moon. “Tammy” took up the psalm-book and adjusted his spectacles, but it was of no avail. The solitary “dips” at each side of the pulpit showed long wicks but little flame. The minister fumbled about for a time, but could not find the object of his search. At last, screwing his face, and shrugging his shoulders, he exclaimed, addressing the beadle (who was also the grave-digger),

“Pate, I say, Pate! what’s come ower ye?—whaur’s the snuffers, man?”

Numerous anecdotes of a similar kind are recorded of the eccentric divine of Auchincraig. Once, however, on a baptismal occasion in the church, he committed what was regarded as a sacrilegious act by many of his parishioners. It set the tongues of all the mothers and grandmothers a-wagging for a month, and “Tammy” narrowly escaped a presbyterial investigation. The affair was innocent enough, allowing a margin for oddity of character, and he would, in all probability, have come off triumphant from a trial, unless the members of the presbytery had been rigid disciplinarians. The circumstances of the case may briefly be told. At the conclusion of the forenoon’s discourse, a child was brought up for baptism. The father received the customary exhortations and took his vows, and “Tammy” had just folded up his sleeve preparatory to sprinkling the baptismal water on the infant’s face, when he found to his surprise that Peter, otherwise Pate, the beadle, had stinted somewhat the necessary supply of liquid, perhaps in deference to the wishes of the child’s mother. The eccentric minister had conscientious objections at performing the sacred rite in a perfunctory manner, and he accordingly lifted the large pewter basin from its place, much to the amazement of the congregation, and sprinkled the whole contents to the last drop over the face and white attire of the squalling babe! He then coolly continued the service, in his own peculiar style, as if nothing extraordinary had occurred.

The Reverend Thomas Watson made himself at home wherever he was. When breakfasting with any of his parishioners, or in the neighbouring manses of brother clergymen, he invariably took possession of the largest egg, giving as his excuse and speaking from his experience, that “the biggest

were aye the maist caller!" He was very fond of porter, and could drink as much toddy as any laird in all Strathkirtle, without showing the slightest symptoms that he had imbibed more than was good for the health of his body and brain. "Tammy," it must be confessed, with all his good qualities, was rather lazy and self indulgent. To have spent more than an hour or two in the preparation of a discourse he would have regarded as a culpable waste of precious time. A clergyman in the neighbourhood once narrated to me a ludicrous instance of the manner in which the Auchincraig minister rolled the burden of duty upon the shoulders of others, and managed to escape himself.

"Tammy," on a certain occasion, was assisting at the dispensation of the sacrament in another part of the county. The good cheer provided for clergymen in the manses at communion seasons he relished with infinite zest, and he generally contrived to coax the younger "hands" into undertaking a large share of his allotted spiritual work. When he could not succeed by coaxing, he adopted more effective means. On the special occasion referred to, he had taken as little part as he possibly could in the Saturday and Sunday services. It was his duty on Monday to preach one of two sermons; but that was with him the great day of the feast; a good winding-up dinner was expected in the afternoon, and he felt little inclination for ministerial work. Accordingly, as soon as breakfast was finished, and an hour before the commencement of public worship, he mysteriously disappeared. When the bell began to toll, the Rev. Thomas was searched for through every room of the house, and in every nook of the manse garden, but he could not be discovered, and another clergyman present was compelled, at a moment's notice, to undertake the duty of the renegade. Meanwhile, "Tammy" was stretched at full length in an ad-

joining corn-field, quietly sunning himself, with much self-complacent composure, and listening to the voice of psalms floating upwards to the summer heavens from the lips of the assembled worshippers. He did not leave his lair until the guests were assembled for dinner, and then he returned to the manse, and heartily thanked the "dear brother" who had officiated in his stead. His ready wit, his contagious laugh, his fund of racy anecdotes, would doubtless be regarded by the company as some compensation for the sin he had committed in failing to discharge his ministerial duty. Many years have elapsed since old Tammy Watson was gathered to his fathers; and of the ancient kirk of Auchincraig in which he preached not one stone now stands upon another. *Requiescat in pace!*

The parish dominie was another of the eccentric characters in the village. He inhabited a house that had once seen better days, and he appeared also to have seen them himself. He was a tall, thin, silent, swarthy man, past middle age, abstemious and even miserly in his habits. Dominie Dawson was a bachelor, and few people ever crossed his threshold. He disliked old "Tammy," who took a malicious pleasure in plaguing and bantering him upon the spareness of his body. Never were two men, occupying the highest posts in a parish, more utterly opposed to each other in appearance, tastes, and habits. "Tammy" was always ready with his joke; dominie Dawson had never even perpetrated a pun all his life. "Tammy" laughed immoderately when anything tickled his fancy; dominie Dawson was seldom seen to relax his grim countenance by a smile. Some men seem to have all things in common, but these two had absolutely nothing. The dominie never dined at the manse, and the minister never supped with the dominie. Still there was room in the parish for them both,

and each held on the tenor of his way, independent of the other. The dominie, it could not be denied, was by far a more learned man than the minister. He was a capital linguist, as had been proved on more than one occasion, although his knowledge of languages was of little practical avail in the village of Auchincraig. He was also an enthusiastic naturalist. He returned from solitary rambles among the woods, and along the banks of the Kirtle, with his hat full of wild flowers and "weeds of glorious feature." The old wives of the village used to say, "the man mun be crazed, for he's aye houkin' among divots!" On Saturday afternoons he sent bands of the school children away in search of beetles, moths, butterflies, and all varieties of insects; and these, after much study and careful examination, he pinned carefully on squares of pasteboard. Dominie Dawson was, in fact, an unrecognised genius. He seemed quite out of place in that secluded village, and yet it was almost impossible that he could have existed anywhere else. He was neither very much beloved, nor particularly disliked by his scholars. He flourished the birch pretty vigorously at times, and it was universally allowed that he made an excellent teacher. He opened his school each day with a prayer, which he had repeated so often that he could think on other matters during the time of its delivery. He always kept his eyes wide open when engaged in the act of devotion, watching intently the behaviour of his scholars, and no sooner was the prayer finished than he proceeded to apply the birchen rod as a corrective to misconduct, and an incitement to devotional feeling. "Tammy," alluding to this circumstance, said to him one day—"Skelpin' may mak gude scholars, dominie, but it's sure to mak bad Christians." After school-hours, the dominie either kept within doors, or walked forth alone. He had

not a single companion in the whole village, nor did he cultivate any one's society. He returned a salutation with civility, but appeared to have no desire for further intercourse. He was still parish teacher when I left the village; but it is more than probable that the loneliness of his life has now merged into the solitude of the grave.

After the minister and dominie, the village crier must not be forgotten. He used a large hand-bell instead of the kettle-drum which is employed in most country places to herald important public announcements, "Pob Jamie" was the name by which the bellman, as he was called, was generally known throughout the district. A squalid, ragged, cadaverous, miserable-looking object he was. He wore a hat "which was not all a hat," part of the rim being gone, and the rain and sunshine finding a free passage through its rents of ruin. A long gaberlunzie's gaberdine, formed, like Joseph's coat, of many colours, and adorned with many streamers, descended from his neck to his heels. His feet were strapped over the soles of old shoes that served the purpose of sandals. Thus arrayed, he shuffled with his bell through the streets of Auchincraig, like the presiding genius of the place. It was no use attempting to clothe him in better attire. If he had been presented over night with a royal mantle, he would have appeared at his vocation next day in his many-coloured and tattered gaberdine. "Pob Jamie" was "cracked," and public pity alone kept him in his responsible office. It was one of the most ludicrous sights in the world to see him actively engaged in the discharge of his duty, for which he seemed to think he had special calling. After tingling his bell for a time, he planted his staff behind him, and leant upon it in a half-sitting posture, and then drawing a long breath, commenced thus, in drawling tones, to give the world the benefit of his announcement:

—“Go-od faa-aat bee-eef to be so-old at Mustruss Ma - act - avushes sho - op at sa-axpence the pund.” Poor Pob made a sad mess of long roup-bills and documents of a similar kind. The villagers, accustomed to his voice and manner, could make some meaning out of his words ; but to strangers it sounded like a language never spoken before on earth since the dispersion at the Tower of Babel. The village boys annoyed the bellman greatly by mimicking his attitude and voice when he was in the act of “crying” through the streets. It invariably excited his somewhat irascible temper, and he prolonged and intensified his tones to an amusing extent. Jamie had a withered, ill-natured, half-crazed old woman for a wife, and a wretched cat-and-dog life they led together in their tottering hovel. The union of these two miserable beings was a melancholy caricature of the matrimonial alliance. They were never known to exchange a single word of affection. In fact, they were apparently bound to each other by mutual hatred. It was strange to think for what purpose they had been created, or why they should exist in the world so long. One winter day, after going his customary round, Pob fell sick, and rapidly declined. In the course of a day or two it was apparent that he was on the very verge of death. His old wife contemplated with evident pleasure the prospect of his speedy dissolution, and

within five minutes of his death the half-crazed hag hissed these words into his ear, “Dee, ye deevil, dee ! ”

Space would fail me to describe minutely all the oddities of Auchincraig. There was the keeper of the post-office—a dwarfish man, with elfin locks, and a notorious squint, who knew all the secrets of the village, and seemed to possess the power of reading the contents of letters without breaking the seals. There was “burnewin,”—a man of huge stature and gigantic strength,—whose “smiddy,” after nightfall, when the furnace blazed, was the favourite resort of all the cockfighters, poachers, and blackguards throughout Strathkirtle. There were the “souter” and the tailor, politicians both, and hard drinkers to boot. Nor did the village want its due complement of “innocents.” It had greatly more than the average number ; and throughout all my wanderings, and during all my residences in towns and remote villages, I have never met so many odd characters gathered together as in old Auchincraig. It seemed to me strange that in a valley so beautiful,—where nature is prodigal of her richest gifts, where flowers bloom, birds sing, and corn-fields rustle in the summer breeze,—humanity should have appeared in such strange shapes and eccentric manifestations. But the old village is gone, and the old villagers have departed, and the sun now shines upon new homes and fresher hearts.

PERLING JOAN.

BY JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART, LL.D.

OUR Laird was a very young man when his father died, and he gaed awa to France, and Italy, and Flanders, and Germany, immediately, and we saw

naething o’ him for three years ; and my brother, John Baird, went wi’ him as his own body-servant. When that time was gane by, our Johnny cam

hame and tauld us that Sir Claud wad be here the next day, an' that he was bringing hame a foreign lady wi' him—but they were not married. This news was a sair heart, as ye may suppose, to a' that were about the house ; and we were just glad that the auld lady was dead and buried, not to hear of sic doings. But what could we do ? To be sure, the rooms were a' put in order, and the best chamber in the hale house was got ready for Sir Claud and her. John tauld me, when we were alane together that night, that I wad be surprised wi' her beauty when she came.

But I never could have believed, till I saw her, that she was sae very young—such a mere bairn, I may say ; I'm sure she was not more than fifteen. Such a dancing, gleesome bit bird of a lassie was never seen ; and ane could not but pity her mair than blame her for what she had done, she was sae visibly in the daftness and light-headedness of youth. Oh, how she sang, and played, and galloped about on the wild-est horses in the stable, as fearlessly as if she had been a man ! The house was full of fun and glee ; and Sir Claud and she were both so young and so comely, that it was enough to break ane's very heart to behold their thoughtlessness. She was aye sitting on his knee, wi' her arm about his neck ; and for weeks and months this love and merriment lasted. The poor body had no airs wi' her ; she was just as humble in her speech to the like of us, as if she had been a cottar's lassie. I believe there was not one of us that could help liking her, for a' her faults. She was a glaiket creature ; but gentle and tender-hearted as a perfect lamb, and sae bonny ! I never sat eyes upon her match. She had never any colour but black for her gown, and it was commonly satin, and aye made in the same fashion ; and a' the perling about her bosom, and a great gowden chain stuck full of precious rubies and

diamonds. She never put powder on her head neither ; oh proud, proud was she of her hair ! I've often known her comb and comb at it for an hour on end ; and when it was out of the buckle, the bonny black curls fell as low as her knee. You never saw such a head of hair since ye were born. She was the daughter of a rich auld Jew in Flanders, and ran awa frae the house wi' Sir Claud, ae night when there was a great feast gaun on,—the Passover supper, as John thought,—and out she came by the back-door to Sir Claud, dressed for supper wi' a' her braws.

Weel, this lasted for the maist feck of a year ; and Perling Joan (for that was what the servants used to ca' her, frae the laces about her bosom), Mrs Joan lay in and had a lassie.

Sir Claud's auld uncle, the colonel, was come hame from America about this time, and he wrote for the laird to gang in to Edinburgh to see him, and he behoved to do this ; and away he went ere the bairn was mair than a fortnight auld, leaving the lady wi' us.

I was the maist experienced body about the house, and it was me that got chief charge of being with her in her recovery. The poor young thing was quite changed now. Often and often did she greet herself blind, lamenting to me about Sir Claud's no marrying her ; for she said she did not take muckle thought about thae things afore ; but that now she had a bairn to Sir Claud, and she could not bear to look the wee thing in the face, and think a' body would ca' it a bastard. And then she said she was come of as decent folk as any lady in Scotland, and moaned and sobbit about her auld father and her sisters.

But the colonel, ye see, had gotten Sir Claud into the town ; and we soon began to hear reports that the colonel had been terribly angry about Perling Joan, and threatened Sir Claud to

leave every penny he had past him, if he did not put Joan away, and marry a lady like himself. And what wi' fleeching, and what wi' flyting, sae it was that Sir Claud went away to the north wi' the colonel, and the marriage between him and lady Juliana was agreed upon, and everything settled.

Everybody about the house had heard mair or less about a' this, or ever a word of it came her length. But at last, Sir Claud himself writes a long letter, telling her what a' was to be ; and offering to gie her a heap o' siller, and send our John ower the sea wi' her, to see her safe back to her friends—her and her baby, if she liked best to take it with her ; but if not, the colonel was to take the bairn hame, and bring her up a lady, away from the house here, not to breed any dispeace.

This was what our Johnny said was to be proposed ; for as to the letter itself, I saw her get it, and she read it twice ower, and flung it into the fire before my face. She read it, whatever it was, with a wonderful composure ; but the moment after it was in the fire she gaed clean aff into a fit, and she was out of one and into another for maist part of the forenoon. Oh, what a sight she was ! It would have melted the heart of stone to see her.

The first thing that brought her to herself was the sight of her bairn. I brought it, and laid it on her knee, thinking it would do her good if she could give it a suck ; and the poor trembling thing did as I bade her ; and the moment the bairn's mouth was at the breast, she turned as calm as the baby itsel—the tears rapping ower her cheeks, to be sure, but not one word more. I never heard her either greet or sob again a' that day.

I put her and the bairn to bed that night—but nae combing and curling o' the bonnie black hair did I see then. However, she seemed very calm and composed, and I left them, and gaed to

my ain bed, which was in a little room within hers.

Next morning, the bed was found cauld and empty, and the front door of the house standing wide open. We dragged the waters, and sent man and horse every gate, but ne'er a trace of her could we ever light on, till a letter came twa or three weeks after, addressed to me, frae hersel. It was just a line or twa, to say that she was well, and thanking me, poor thing, for having been attentive about her in her down-lying. It was dated frae London. And she charged me to say nothing to anybody of having received it. But this was what I could not do ; for everybody had set it down for a certain thing, that the poor lassie had made away baith wi' hersel and the bairn.

I dinna weel ken whether it was owing to this or not, but Sir Claud's marriage was put aff for twa or three years, and he never cam near us a' that while. At length word came that the wedding was to be put over directly ; and painters, and upholsterers, and I know not what all, came and turned the hale house upside down, to prepare for my lady's hame-coming. The only room that they never meddled wi' was that that had been Mrs Joan's : and no doubt they had been ordered what to do.

Weel, the day came, and a braw sunny spring day it was, that Sir Claud and the bride were to come hame to the Mains. The grass was a' new mawn about the policy, and the walks sweepit, and the cloth laid for dinner, and everybody in their best to give them their welcoming. John Baird came galloping up the avenue like mad, to tell us that the coach was amait within sight, and gar us put oursels in order afore the ha' steps. We were a' standing there in our ranks, and up came the coach rattling and driving, wi' I dinna ken how mony servants riding behind it ; and Sir Cland lookit out at the window, and was waving his handker-

chief to us, when, just as fast as fire ever flew frae flint, a woman in a red cloak rushed out from among the auld shrubbery at the west end of the house, and flung herself in among the horses' feet, and the wheels gaed clean out ower her breast, and crushed her dead in a single moment. She never stirred.

Poor thing ! she was nae Perling Joan then. She was in rags—perfect rags all below the bit cloak ; and we found the bairn, rowed in a checked apron, lying just behind the hedge. A braw heart-some welcoming for a pair of young married folk !—*The History of Matthew Wald.*

JANET SMITH.

BY PROFESSOR THOMAS GILLESPIE.

OLD Janet Smith lived in a cottage overshadowed by an ash-tree, and flanked by a hawthorn, called Lasscairn,—so named, in all probability, from a cairn of stones, almost in the centre of which this simple habitation was placed, in which, even within the period of my remembrance, three maiden veterans kept “rock and reel, bleezing hearth and reeking lum.” They were uniformly mentioned in the neighbourhood as “the lasses o’ Lasscairn,” though their united ages might have amounted to something considerably above three-score thrice told. Janet, however, of whom I am now speaking, had been married in her teens, and her husband having lost his life in a lime-quarry, she had been left with an only child, a daughter, whom, by the help of God’s blessing, and her wee wheel, she had reared and educated as far as the Proofs and Willison’s. This daughter having attained to a suitable age, had been induced one fine summer evening, whilst her mother was engaged in her evening devotion under the shadow of the ash-tree, to take a pleasure walk with Rob Paton, a neighbouring ploughman, but then recently enlisted, and to share his name and his fortunes for twenty-four months to come. At the end of this period, she found her mother nearly in the same position in

which she had left her, praying earnestly to her God to protect, direct, and return her “bairn.” There were, however, two bairns for the good old woman to bless, instead of one, and the young Jessie Paton was said to be the very picture of her mother. Be that as it may, old Janet, now a grannie, loved the bairn, forgave the mother, and by the help of an additional wheel, which, in contradistinction to her own, was designated “muckle,” she, and her “broken-hearted, deserted” daughter, contrived for years to earn such a subsistence as their very moderate wants required. At last a severe fever cut off the mother, and left a somewhat sickly child at about nine years of age, under the sole protection of an aged and enfeebled grandmother. It was at this stage of old Janet’s earthly travail that, in the character of a schoolboy, I became acquainted with her and her daughter,—for ever after the mother’s death, the child knew her grandmother by no other name, and under no other relation.

Janet had a particular way—still the practice in Dumfriesshire—of dressing or preparing her meal of potatoes. They were scraped, well-dried, salted, beetled, buttered, milked, and ultimately rumbled into the most beautiful and palatable consistency. In short, they

became that first, and—beyond the limits of the south country—least known of all delicacies, “champt potatoes.” As I returned often hungry and weary from school, Janet’s pot presented itself to me, hanging in the reek, and at a considerable elevation above the fire, as the most tempting of all objects. In fact, Janet, knowing that my hour of return from school was full two hours later than hers of repast, took this method of reserving for me a full heaped spoonful of the residue of her and her Jessie’s meal. Never whilst I live, and live by food, shall I forget the exquisite feelings of eager delight with which that single overloaded spoonful of beat or “champt” potatoes was devoured. There are pleasures of sentiment and imagination of which I have occasionally partaken, and others connected with what is called the heart and affections; all these are beautiful and engrossing in their way and in their season, but to a hungry schoolboy, who has devoured his dinner “piece” ere ten o’clock a.m., and is returning to his home at a quarter before five, the presentiment, the sight, and, above all, the taste and reflection connected with the swallowing of a spoonful—and such a spoonful!—of Janet Smith’s potatoes, is, to say nothing flighty or extravagant, not less seasonable than exquisite. As my tongue walked slowly and cautiously round and round the lower and upper boundaries of the delicious load, as if loath rapidly to diminish that bulk, which the craving stomach would have wished to have been increased had it been tenfold, my whole soul was wrapped in Elysium; it tumbled about, and rioted in an excess of delight—a kind of feather-bed of downy softness. Drinking is good enough in its season, particularly when one is thirsty; but the pleasures attendant on the satisfying of *the appetite* for me!—this is assuredly the great, the master gratification.

But Janet did not only deal in pota-

toes; she had likewise a cheese, and, on pressing occasions, a bottle of beer besides. The one stood in a kind of corner press or cupboard, whilst the other occupied a still less dignified position beneath old Janet’s bed. To say the truth of Janet’s cheese, it was not much beholden to the maker. It might have been advantageously cut into bullets or marbles, such was its hardness and solidity; but then, *in those days*, my teeth were good; and, with a keen stomach and a willing mind, much may be effected even on a “three times skimmed sky-blue!” The beer—for which I have often adventured into the terra incognita already mentioned, even at the price of a prostrate person and a dusty jacket—was excellent, brisk, frothy, and nippy;—my breath still goes when I think of it. And then Janet wore such long strings of tape, blue and red, white and yellow, all striped and variegated like a gardener’s garter! I shall never be such a beau again, as when my stockings on Sabbath were ornamented with a new pair of Janet’s well-known, much-prized, and admired garters.

It was, however, after all, on Sabbath that Janet appeared to move in her native element. It was on Sabbath that her face brightened, and her step became accelerated—that her spectacles were carefully wiped with the corner of a clean neck-napkin, and her Bible was called into early and almost uninterrupted use. It was on Sabbath that her devotions were poured forth—both in a family and private capacity—with an earnestness and a fervency which I have never seen surpassed in manse or mansion, in desk or pulpit. There is, indeed, nothing in nature so beautiful and elevating as sincere and heartfelt, heart-warming devotion. There is a poor, frail creature, verging on three-score and ten years, with an attendant lassie, white-faced, and every way “shilpy” in appearance. Around them

are nothing more elevating or exciting than a few old sticks of furniture, sooty rafters, and a smoky atmosphere. Surely imbecility has here clothed herself in the forbidding garb of dependence and squalid poverty! The worm that crawls into light through the dried mole-hill, all powdered over with the dust from which it is escaping, is a fit emblem of such an object and such a condition. But over all this let us pour the warm and glowing radiance of genuine devotion! The roots of that consecrated ash can bear witness to those halt-articulated breathings, which connect the weakness of man with the power of God,—the squalidness of poverty with the radiant richness of divine grace. Do those two hearts, which under one covering *now* breathe forth their evening sacrifice in hope and reliance—do they feel, do they acknowledge any alliance with the world's opinions, the world's artificial and cruel distinctions? If there be one object more pleasing to God and to the holy ministers of His will than another, it is this—age uniting with youth, and youth with age, in the giving forth into audible, if not articulate expression, the fulness of the devout heart!

Lord W——, whose splendid residence stands about fifteen miles distant from Lasscairn, happened to be engaged in a hunting expedition in the neighbourhood of this humble and solitary abode, and having separated from his attendants and companions, he be-thought himself of resting for a little under a roof, however humble, from which he saw smoke issuing. But when he put his thumb to the latch it would not move; and after an effort or two, he applied first his eye, and lastly his ear, to the keyhole, to ascertain the presence of the inhabitants. The solemn voice of fervent prayer met his ear, uttered by a person evidently not in a

kneeling, but in an erect position; he could, in short, distinctly gather the nature and tendency of Janet's address to her Maker.

She was manifestly engaged in asking a blessing on her daily meal, and was proceeding to enumerate, with the voice of thanksgiving, the many mercies with which, under God's good providence, she and hers had been visited. After an extensive enumeration, she came at last to speak of that *ample provision* on which she was now imploring a blessing. In this part of her address she dwelt with peculiar cheerfulness, as well as earnestness of tone, on that goodness which had provided so bountifully for her, whilst many better deserving than she were worse circumstanced. The whole tenor of her prayer tended to impress the listener with the belief that Janet's board, though spread in a humble hut, must be at least amply supplied with the necessaries of life. But what was Lord W——'s surprise, on entrance, to find that a round oaten bannock, toasting before a brick at a peat fire, with a basin of whey,—the gift of a kind neighbour,—composed that *ample and bountiful provision* for which this humble, but contented and pious woman expressed so much gratitude! Lord W—— was struck with the contrast between his own condition and feelings and those of this humble pair; and, in settling upon Janet and her inmate £6 a-year for life, he enabled her to accommodate herself with a new plaid and black silk hood, in which she appeared, with her granddaughter, every Sabbath, occupying her well-known and acknowledged position on the lowest step of the pulpit stair, and paying the same respect to the minister in passing as if she had been entirely dependent on her own industry and the good will of her neighbours as formerly.

THE UNLUCKY TOP BOOTS.

CHAPTER I.

Top Boots, as everybody must have remarked, are now [1833] nearly altogether out of fashion. Their race is all but extinct. An occasional pair may indeed still be seen encasing the brawny legs of a stout elderly country gentleman on a market day, or on the occasion of a flying visit to the metropolis ; but with this exception, and with probably that of some hale obstinate bachelor octogenarian, who, in full recollection of the impression which his top boots had made on the public mind some fifty years since, still persists in thrusting his shrivelled shanks into the boots of his youth ;—we say, with the first positive, and the last probable exception, this highly respectable-looking, and somewhat flashy, article of dress has entirely disappeared.

Time was, however, and we recollect it well, when matters stood far otherwise with top boots. We have a distinct vision of numberless pairs flitting before our eyes, through the mazes of the various thoroughfares of the city ; but, alas ! they have vanished, one after another, like stars before the light of approaching day. Rest to their *soles*—they are now gathered to their fathers—their brightness is extinguished—their glory is gone. The Conqueror of Waterloo hath conquered them also. The top boots have fallen before the Wellingtons !

We have said that we recollect when it was otherwise with top boots, and so we do. We recollect when a pair of top boots was a great object of ambition with the young, whose worldly prosperity was all yet to come—whose means of indulging in such little vanities of the flesh were yet to be acquired. To them a pair of top boots was a sort of land-mark in the voyage of life ; a

palpable, prominent, and desirable object to be attained ; a sort of Cape Horn to be doubled. Nor were they less objects of ambition at the time we speak of—say about 40 years since—to the more advanced, whose circumstances required a long previous hint to prepare for such an event as the purchase of a pair of top boots. In short, top boots were the rage of the day. The apprentice, the moment he got “out” of his time, got “into” his top boots. The first thing the young grocer did was to get a pair of top boots. No lover then went to woo his mistress but in top boots, or at least if he did, the chance was, that he would go to very little purpose. The buckishly-inclined mechanic, too, hoarded his superfluous earnings until they reached the height of a pair of top boots, in which to entomb his lower limbs. Although their visits now, as we have already hinted, are “few and far between,” we have seen the day when, instead of being but occasionally seen, like solitary points of light as they are now, on the dusky street, they converted it by their numbers into an absolute *via lactea*,—a perfect galaxy of white leather,—or shot, frequent, pale, and flitting, like northern streamers, through the dark tide of humanity as it strolled along.

No marvel is it, therefore, that, in the midst of the wide prevalence of this top boot epidemic, poor Tommy Aikin should have fallen a victim to the disease—that his heart should have been set upon a pair of top boots ; nor is it a marvel that Mr Aikin should have been able finally to gratify this longing of his, seeing that he was in tolerable circumstances, or at least in such circumstances as enabled him, by retrenching a little somewhere else, to

attain the great object of his ambition — a pair of top boots. No marvel, then, as we have said, are these things which we have related of Mr Aikin ; but great marvel is it that a pair of top boots should have wrought any man such mischief, as we shall presently show they did to that honest man. But let us not anticipate. Let us, as has been before wisely said, begin at the beginning, and say who Mr Aikin was, and what were the evils in which his top boots involved him.

Be it known, then, to all whom it may concern, that Mr Thomas Aikin was an officer of Excise, and was, at the period to which our story relates, residing in a certain small town not more than fifty miles distant from the city of Glasgow. Mr Aikin was a stout-made middle-aged man, exceedingly good-natured, kind, civil, and obliging. In short, he was an excellent fellow, honest and upright in all his dealings, and a faithful servant of the revenue. Everybody liked Mr Aikin, and Mr Aikin liked everybody ; and sorely did everybody lament his misfortunes when they fell upon him. Mr Aikin had for many years led a happy life in the bosom of his family. He laughed and joked away, took his jug of toddy, caressed his children, spoke always affectionately to and of his wife, and was so spoken to and of by her in return. In short, Mr Aikin was a happy man up to that evil hour when he conceived the idea of possessing himself of a pair of top boots.

"Mary," said Mr Aikin, one luckless evening, to his loving wife, after having sat for about half an hour looking into the fire.

"Aweel, Thomas?" said his spouse, in token of her attention.

"I wad like to hae a pair o' tap boots," replied Mr Aikin, shortly, and without further preamble, although he had in reality bestowed a good deal of thought on the subject previously ; in-

deed, a dim undefined vision of top boots had been floating before his mind's eye for nearly a month before it took the distinct shape of such a determination as he was now about to express.

"Aweel, Thomas," replied his better half, with equal brevity, "ye had better get a pair."

"They're decent lookin' things," rejoined Mr Aikin.

"Indeed are they," said his indulgent spouse,— "very decent and respectable, Thomas."

"Rather flashy though, I doubt, for the like o' me," quoth Mr Aikin.

"I dinna see that, Thomas, sae lang as ye're able to pay for them," remarked Mrs Aikin.

"No so very able, my dear," responded her husband ; "but I wad like to hae a pair for a' that, just to wear on Sundays and collection days."

"Aweel, Thomas, get them ; and what for no ?" replied Mrs Aikin, "since your mind's bent on them. We'll save the price o' them aff something else."

We need not pursue further the amiable colloquy which took place on this fatal night between Mr Aikin and his wife. Suffice it to say, that that night fixed Mr Aikin's resolution to order a pair of top boots. On the very next day he was measured for the said boots ; and late on the Saturday evening following, the boots, with their tops carefully papered, to protect them from injury, were regularly delivered by an apprentice boy into the hands of Mrs Aikin herself, for her husband's interest.

As Mr Aikin was not himself in the house when the boots were brought home, they were placed in a corner of the parlour to await his pleasure ; and certainly nothing could look more harmless or more inoffensive than did these treacherous boots, as they now stood, with their muffled tops and shining feet, in the corner of Mr Aikin's

parlour. But alas ! alas ! shortsighted mortals that we are, that could not foresee the slightest portion of the evils with which these rascally boots were fraught ! To shorten our story as much as possible, we proceed to say that Mr Aikin at length came home, and being directed to where the boots lay, he raised them up in one hand, holding a candle in the other ; and having turned them round and round several times, admiring their gloss and fair proportions, laid them down again with a calm quiet smile of satisfaction, and retired to bed.

Sunday came, the church bells rang, and Mr Aikin sallied forth in all the pomp and glory of a pair of spick and span new top boots. With all Mr Aikin's good qualities, there was, however,—and we forgot to mention it before,—a “leetle” touch of personal vanity ; the slightest imaginable it was, but still such an ingredient did enter into the composition of his character, and it was this weakness, as philosophers call it, which made him hold his head at an unwonted height, and throw out his legs with a flourish, and plant his foot with a firmness and decision on this particular Sunday, which was quite unusual with him, or, at least, which had passed unnoticed before. With the exception, however, of a few passing remarks, in which there was neither much acrimony nor much novelty, Mr Aikin's boots were allowed to go to and from the church in peace and quietness. “Hae ye seen Mr Aikin's tap boots ?” “Faith, Mr Aikin looks weel in his tap boots.” “Mr Aikin was unco grand the day in his tap boots.” Such and such like were the only observations which Mr Aikin's top boots elicited on the first Sunday of their appearance. Sunday after Sunday came and departed, and with the Sundays came also and departed Mr Aikin's top boots, for he wore them only on that sacred day, and on collection days, as he

himself originally proposed. Like every other marvel, they at length sank quietly to rest, becoming so associated and identified with the wearer, that no one ever thought of discussing them separately. Deceitful calm—treacherous silence !—it was but the gathering of the storm.

It so happened that Mr Aikin, in the language of the Excise, surveyed, that is, ascertained and levied the duties payable by a tanner, or leather dresser, who carried on his business in the town in which Mr Aikin resided. Now, the Honourable Board of Excise were in those days extremely jealous of the fidelity of their officers, and in a spirit of suspicion of the honour and faith of man peculiar to themselves, readily listened to every report prejudicial to the character of their servants. Here, then, was an apparently intimate connection, and of the worst sort,—a pair of top boots,—between a revenue officer and a trader, a dresser of leather. Remote and obscure hints of connivance between the former and the latter began to arise, and in despite of the general esteem in which Mr Aikin was held, and the high opinion which was entertained of his worth and integrity, these hints and suspicions—such is the wickedness and perversity of human nature—gradually gained ground, until they at length reached the ears of the Board, with the most absurd aggravations.

Their honours were told, but by whom was never ascertained, that the most nefarious practices were going on in —, and to an enormous extent. Large speculations in contraband leather, on the joint account of the officer and trader, were talked of ; the one sinking his capital, the other sacrificing the king's duties. Whole hogsheads of manufactured boots and shoes were said to be exported to the West Indies, as the common adventure of the officer and trader. The entire family and friends of the former, to the tenth

degree of propinquity, were said to have been supplied gratis with boots and shoes for the last ten years. In short, the whole affair was laid before their honours, the Commissioners of Excise, decked out in the blackest colours, and so swollen, distorted, and exaggerated, that no man could have conceived for a moment that so monstrous a tale of dishonesty and turpitude could have been manufactured out of a thing so simple as a pair of top boots. Indeed, how could he? For the boots—the real ground of the vile fabrication—were never once mentioned, nor in the slightest degree alluded to; but, as it was, the thing bore a serious aspect, and so thought the Honourable Board of Excise.

A long and grave consultation was held in the Board-room, and the result was, an order to the then collector of Excise in Glasgow to make a strict and immediate inquiry into the circumstances of the case, and to report thereon; a measure which was followed up, in a day or two afterwards, by their honours dispatching two surveying-generals, as they are called, also to Glasgow, to assist at and superintend the investigation which the collector had been directed to set on foot. On the arrival of these officers at Glasgow, they forthwith waited upon the collector, to ascertain what he had learned regarding Mr Aikin's nefarious practices. The result of the consultation, which was here again held, was a determination, on the part of the generals and the collector, to proceed to the scene of Mr Aikin's ignominy, and to prosecute their inquiries on the spot, as the most likely way of arriving at a due knowledge of the facts.

Accordingly, two chaises were hired at the expense of the Crown, one for the two generals, and another for the collector and his clerk—all this, good reader, be it remembered, arising from the simple circumstance of Mr Aikin's having indulged himself in the luxury of a single solitary pair of top boots,

—and, moreover, the first pair he ever had. The gentlemen, having seated themselves in the carriages, were joined, just before starting, by a friend of the collector's, on horseback, who, agreeably to an arrangement he had made with the latter on the preceding day, now came to ride out with them to the scene of their impending labours; and thus, though of course he had nothing to do with the proceedings of the day, he added not a little to the imposing character of the procession, which was now about to move in the direction of Mr Aikin's top boots.

An hour and a half's drive brought the whole cavalcade into the little town in which the unfortunate owner of the said boots resided; and little did he think, honest man, as he eyed the procession passing the windows, marvelling the while what it could mean—little, we say, did he think that the sole and only object, *pro tempore* at least, of those who composed it, was to inquire how, and by what means, and from whom, he had gotten his top boots. Of this fact, however, he was soon made aware. In less than half an hour he was sent for, and told, for the first time, of the heavy charges which lay against him. A long, tedious investigation took place; item after item of poor Aikin's indictment melted away beneath the process of inquiry; until at length the whole affair resolved itself into the original cause of all the mischief,—the pair of top boots. Nothing which could in the slightest degree impugn Mr Aikin's honesty remained but these unlucky top boots, and for them he immediately produced his shoemaker's receipt:—

Mr AIKIN,

Bought of DAVID ANDERSON,

One pair of Top Boots, . . . £2, 2s.

Settled in full,

DAVID ANDERSON.

With this finisher the investigation

closed, and Mr Aikin stood fully and honourably acquitted of all the charges brought against him. The impression, however, which the affair made at head-quarters, was far from being favourable to him. He was ever after considered there in the light, not of an innocent man, but as one against whom nothing could be proven ; and his motions were watched with the utmost vigilance. The consequence was, that, in less than three months, he was dismissed from the service of the revenue,

ostensibly for some trifling omission of duty ; but he himself thought, and so did everybody else, that the top boots were in reality the cause of his misfortune.

One would have thought that this was quite enough of mischief to arise from one pair of top boots, and so thought everybody but the top boots themselves, we suppose. This, however, was but a beginning of the calamities into which they walked with their unfortunate owner.

CHAPTER II.

ABOUT four miles distant from the town in which Mr Aikin lived, there resided an extensive coal-mine proprietor of the name of Davidson ; and it so happened that he, too, had a pre-dilection for that particular article of dress, already so often named, viz., top boots ; indeed, he was never known to wear anything else in their place. Davidson was an elderly gentleman, harsh and haughty in his manner, and extremely mean in all his dealings—a manner and disposition which made him greatly disliked by the whole country, and especially by his workmen, the miners, of whom he employed upwards of a hundred and fifty. The abhorrence in which Mr Davidson was at all times held by his servants, was at this particular moment greatly increased by an attempt which he was making to reduce his workmen's wages ; and to such a height had their resentment risen against their employer, that some of the more ferocious of them were heard to throw out dark hints of personal violence ; and it was much feared by Davidson's friends—of whom he had, however, but a very few, and these mostly connected with him by motives of interest—that such an occurrence would, in reality, happen one night or other, and that at

no great distance of time. Nor was this fear groundless.

Mr Davidson was invited to dine with a neighbouring gentleman. He accepted the invitation, very foolishly, as his family thought ; but he did accept it, and went accordingly. It was in the winter time, and the house of his host was about a mile distant from his own residence. Such an opportunity as this of giving their employer a sound drubbing had been long looked for by some half dozen of Mr Davidson's workmen, and early and correct information on the subject of his dining out enabled them to avail themselves of it. The conspirators, having held a consultation, resolved to waylay Davidson on his return home. With this view they proceeded, after it became dark, in the direction of the house in which their employer was dining. Having gone about half way, they halted, and held another consultation, whereat it was determined that they should conceal themselves in a sunk fence which ran alongside of the road, until the object of their resentment approached, when they should all rush out upon him at once, and belabour him to their hearts' content. This settled, they all cowered

down into the ditch, to await the arrival of their victim. "But how will we ken him i' the dark?" said Jock Tamson, one of the conspirators, in a low whisper, to his next neighbour ; "we may fa' foul o' somebody else in a mistak." The question rather posed Jock's neighbour, who immediately put it to the person next him, and he again to the next, and on went the important query, until all were in possession of it ; but none could answer it. At length, one of more happy device than the rest suggested that Mr Davidson might be recognised by his top boots. The idea pleased all, and was by all considered infallible, for the fame of Mr Aikin's boots had not yet reached this particular quarter of the country. Satisfied that they had hit upon an unerring mark by which to know their man, the ruffians waited patiently for his approach.

At length, after fully two hours' watching, the fall of a footstep broke faintly on their ears ; it came nearer and nearer, and became every moment more and more distinct. Breathless with the intensity of their feelings, the conspirators, in dead silence, grasped their cudgels with increased energy, and sunk themselves in the ditch until their eyes were on a level with the ground, that they might at once place the approaching object full before them, and between them and the feeble light which lingered in the western sky. In the meantime, the wayfarer approached ; two dim whitey objects glimmered indistinctly in the darkness. They were instantly recognized to be Mr Davidson's top boots ; a loud shout followed this feeling of conviction ; the colliers rushed from their hiding-place, and in the next instant half a dozen bludgeons whistled round the ears of the unfortunate wayfarer. The sufferer roared lustily for mercy, but he roared in vain. The blows fell thick and fast upon his luckless head and shoulders, for it was necessary that the work should be done

quickly ; and a few seconds more saw him lying senseless and bleeding in the ditch in which his assailants had concealed themselves. Having satisfied their vengeance, the ruffians now fled, leaving their victim behind them in the condition we have described. Morning came ; a man was found in a ditch, speechless, and bleeding profusely from many severe wounds on the head and face. He was dragged out, and, after cleansing his face from the blood and dirt with which it was encrusted, the unfortunate man was recognised to be—Mr Thomas Aikin !

The unlucky boots, and they alone, were the cause of poor Aikin's mischance. He had, indeed, been mauled by mistake, as the reader will have already anticipated. There was no intention whatever on the part of the colliers to do Mr Aikin any injury, for Mr Aikin, in the whole course of his harmless life, had never done them any ; indeed, he was wholly unknown to them, and they to him. It was the top boots, and nothing but the top boots, that did all the mischief. But to go on with our story. Aikin was carried home, and, through the strength of a naturally good constitution and skilful surgical assistance, recovered so far in six weeks as to be able to go about as usual, although he bore to his grave with him on his face the marks of the violence which he had received, besides being disfigured by the loss of some half dozen of his front teeth.

The top boots, which poor Aikin had worn before as articles of dress, and, of course, as a matter of choice, he was now obliged to wear daily from necessity, being, as we have already related, dismissed from his situation in the Excise. One would think that Aikin had now suffered enough for his predilection for top boots, seeing—at least so far as we can see—that there was no great harm in such an apparently inoffensive indulgence ; but Mr Aikin's evil stars,

or his top boots themselves, we do not know which, were of a totally different opinion, and on this opinion they forthwith proceeded to act.

Some weeks after the occurrence of the disaster just recorded, the little town of ——, where Aikin resided, was suddenly thrown into a state of the utmost horror and consternation by the report of a foul murder and robbery having been committed on the highway, and within a short distance of the town ; and of all the inhabitants who felt horror-struck on this occasion, there was no one more horrified than Mr Thomas Aikin. The report, however, of the murder and robbery was incorrect, in so far as the unfortunate man was still living, although little more, when found in the morning, for the deed had been committed over night. Being a stranger, he was immediately conveyed to the principal inn of the town, put to bed, and medical aid called in. The fiscal, on learning that the man was still in existence, instantly summoned his clerk, and, accompanied by a magistrate, hastened to the dying man's bedside, to take down whatever particulars could be learnt from him regarding the assault and robbery. After patiently and laboriously connecting the half intelligible and disjointed sentences which they from time to time elicited from him, they made out that he was a cattle-dealer, that he belonged to Edinburgh, that he had been in Glasgow, and that, having missed the evening coach which plies between the former and the latter city, he had taken the road on foot, with the view of accomplishing one stage, and there awaiting the coming up of the next coach. They further elicited from him that he had had a large sum of money upon him, of which, of course, he had been deprived. The fiscal next proceeded to inquire if he could identify the person or persons who attacked him. He mumbled a reply in the negative.

"How many were there of them?"

inquired the magistrate. "Were there more than one?"

"Only one," muttered the unfortunate man.

"Was there any peculiarity in his dress or appearance that struck you?" asked the fiscal.

He mumbled a reply, but none of the bystanders could make it out. The question was again put, and both the magistrate and fiscal stooped down simultaneously to catch the answer. After an interval it came—and what think you it was, good reader? Why, "top boots," distinctly and unequivocally. The fiscal and magistrate looked at each other for a second, but neither durst venture to hint at the astounding suspicion which the mention of these remarkable objects forced upon them.

"He wore top boots, you say?" again inquired the fiscal, to make sure that he had heard aright.

"Y-e-s, t-o-p b-o-o-t-s," was again the reply.

"Was he a thin man, or a stout man?"

"A stout man."

"Young or middle-aged?"

"Middle-aged."

"Tall or short?"

"Short," groaned out the sufferer, and, with that word, the breath of life departed from him.

This event, of course, put an immediate end to the inquiry. The fiscal and magistrate now retired to consult together regarding what was best to be done, and to consider the deposition of the murdered man. There was a certain pair of top boots present to the minds of both, but the wearer of them had hitherto borne an unblemished character, and was personally known to them both as a kind-hearted, inoffensive man. Indeed, up to this hour, they would as soon have believed that the minister of the parish would commit a robbery as Mr Aikin—we say Mr Aikin, for we can no

longer conceal the fact, that it was Mr Aikin's boots, however reluctantly admitted, that flashed upon the minds of the two gentlemen of whom we are now speaking.

"The thing is impossible, incredible of such a man as Mr Aikin," said the magistrate, in reply to the first open insinuation of the fiscal, although, in saying this, he said what was not in strict accordance with certain vague suspicions which had taken possession of his own mind.

"Why, I should say so too," replied the officer of the law, "were I to judge by the character which he has hitherto borne; but here," he said, holding up the deposition of the murdered man, "here are circumstances which we cannot be warranted in overlooking, let them implicate whom they may. There is in especial the top boots," went on the fiscal; "now, there is not another pair within ten miles of us but Aikin's; for Mr Davidson, the only man whom I know that wears them besides, is now in London. There is the personal description, too, exact. And besides all this, bailie," continued the law officer, "you will recollect that Mr Aikin is and has been out of employment for the last six months; and there is no saying what a man who has a large family upon his hands will do in these circumstances."

The bailie acknowledged the force of his colleague's observations, but remarked, that, as it was a serious charge, it must be gone cautiously and warily about. "For it wad be," he said, "rather a hard matter to hang a man upon nae ither evidence than a pair o' tap boots."

"Doubtless it would," replied the fiscal; "but here is," he said, "a concatenation of circumstances—a chain of evidence, so far as it goes, perfectly entire and connected. But," he continued, as if to reconcile the bailie to the dangerous suspicion, "an alibi on

the part o' Mr Aikin will set a' to rights, and blaw the hale charge awa, like peelin's o' ingans; and if he be an innocent man, bailie, he can hae nae difficulty in establishing an alibi."

Not so fast, Mr Fiscal, not so fast, if you please; this alibi was not so easily established, or rather it could not be established at all. Most unfortunately for poor Aikin, it turned out, upon an inquiry which the official authorities thought it necessary to set on foot before proceeding to extremities—that is, before taking any decisive steps against the object of their suspicion—that he had been not only absent from his own house until a late hour of the night on which the murder and robbery were committed, but had actually been at that late hour on the very identical road on which it had taken place. The truth is, that Aikin had been dining with a friend who lived about a mile into the country, and, as it unfortunately happened, in the very direction in which the crime had been perpetrated. Still, could it not have been shown that no unnecessary time had elapsed between the moment of his leaving his friend's house and his arrival at his own? Such a circumstance would surely have weighed something in his favour. So it would, probably; but alas! even this slender exculpatory incident could not be urged in his behalf; for the poor man, little dreaming of what was to happen, had drunk a tumbler or two more than enough, and had fallen asleep on the road. In short, the fiscal, considering all the circumstances of the case as they now stood, did not think it consistent with his duty either to delay proceedings longer against Aikin, or to maintain any further delicacy with regard to him. A report of the whole affair was made to the sheriff of Glasgow, who immediately ordered a warrant to be made out for the apprehension of Aikin. This instrument was given forthwith into the custody of two

criminal officers, who set out directly in a post-chaise to execute their commission.

Arriving in the middle of the night, they found poor Aikin, wholly unconscious of the situation in which he stood, in bed and sound asleep. Having roused the unhappy man, and barely allowed him time to draw on his top boots, they hurried him into the chaise, and in little more than an hour thereafter, Aikin was fairly lodged in Glasgow jail, to stand his trial for murder and robbery, and this mainly, if not wholly, on the strength of his top boots.

The day of trial came. The judge summed up the evidence, and, in an eloquent speech, directed the special attention of the jury to Aikin's top boots: indeed, on these he dwelt so much, and with such effect, that the jury returned a verdict of guilty against the prisoner at the bar, who accordingly received sentence of death, but was strongly recommended to mercy by the jury, as well on the ground of his previous good character, as on that of certain misgivings regarding the top boots, which a number of the jury could not help entertaining, in despite of their prominence in the evidence which was led against their unfortunate owner.

Aikin's friends, who could not be persuaded of his guilt, notwithstanding the strong circumstantial proof with which it was apparently established, availing themselves of this recommendation of the jury, immediately set to work to second the humane interference; and Providence in its mercy kindly assisted them. From a communication which the superintendent of police in Glasgow received from the corresponding officer in Edinburgh, about a week after Aikin's condemnation, it appeared that there were more gentlemen of suspicious character in the world who wore top boots than poor Aikin. The letter alluded to an-

nounced the capture of a notorious character—regarding whom information had been received from Bow Street—a “flash cove,” fresh from London, on a foraying expedition in Scotland. The communication described him as being remarkably well dressed, and, in especial, alluded to the circumstance of his wearing top boots; concluding the whole, which was indeed the principal purpose of the letter, by inquiring if there was any charge in Glasgow against such a person as he described. The circumstance, by some fortunate chance, reached the ears of Aikin's friends, and in the hope that something might be made of it, they employed an eminent lawyer in Edinburgh to sift the matter to the bottom.

In the meantime, the Englishman in the top boots was brought to trial for another highway robbery, found guilty, and sentenced to death without hope of mercy. The lawyer whom Aikin's friends had employed, thinking this a favourable opportunity for eliciting the truth from him, seeing that he had now nothing more to fear in this world, waited upon the unfortunate man, and, amidst a confession of a long series of crimes, obtained from him that of the murder and robbery for which poor Aikin had been tried and condemned. The consequence of this important discovery was, the immediate liberation of Aikin, who again returned in peace to the bosom of his family. His friends, however, not contented with what they had done, represented the whole circumstances of the case to the Secretary of State for the Home Department; and under the impression that there lay a claim on the country for reparation for the injury, though inadvertent, which its laws had done to an innocent man, the application was replied to in favourable terms in course of post, and in less than three weeks thereafter, Mr Thomas Aikin was appointed to a situation in

the custom-house in London, worth two hundred pounds a-year. His steadiness, integrity, and general good conduct, soon procured him still further advancement, and he finally died, after enjoying his appointment for many

years, in the annual receipt of more than double the sum which we have just named. And thus ends the eventful history of Mr Thomas Aikin and his Top Boots.—*Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.*

MY FIRST AND LAST PLAY.

BY D. M. MOIR, M.D.

THE time of Tammie Bodkin's apprenticeship being nearly worn through, it behoved me, as a man attentive to business and the interests of my family, to cast my een around me in search of a callant to fill his place, as it is customary in our trade for our young men, when their time is out, taking a year's journeymanship in Edinburgh to perfect them in the mair intricate branches of the business, and learn the newest manner of the French and London fashions, by cutting claiith for the young advocates, the college students, and the rest of the principal tip-top bucks.

Having, though I say it myself, the word of being a canny maister, mair than ane brought their callants to me, on reading the bill of "An Apprentice Wanted" plastered on my shop window. Offering to bind them for the regular time, yet not wishing to take but ane, I thocht best no to fix in a hurry, and make choice of him that seemed mair exactly cut out for my purpose. In the course of a few weeks three or four cast up, among whom was a laddie of Ben Aits, the mealmonger, and a son of William Burlings, the baker; to say little of Saunders Broom, the sweep, that wad fain hae putten his blackit-looking bit creature with the ae ee under my wing; but I aye lookit to respectability in these matters, so glad was I when I got the offer of Mungo

Glen.—But more of this in half a minute.

I must say I was glad of any feasible excuse to make to the sweep, to get quit of him and his laddie,—the father being a drucken ne'er-do-weel, that I wonder didna fa' lang ere this time of day from some chumley-head, and get his neck broken; so I tellt him at lang and last, when he came papping into the shop, plaguing me every time he passed, that I had fittit mysel, and that there would be nae need of his taking the trouble to call again. Upon which he gaed his blackit neeve a desperate thump on the counter, making the observe, that out of respect for him I might have given his son the preference. Though I was a wee puzzled for an answer, I said to him, for want of a better, that having a timber leg, he couldna weel crook his hough to the labroad for our trade.

"Hout, tout," said Saunders, giving his lips a smack—"crook his hough, ye body you! Do ye think his timber leg canna screw off? That'll no pass."

I was a wee dumbfounded at this cleverness; so I said, mair on my guard, "True, true, Saunders; but he's ower little."

"Ower little, and be hanged to ye!" cried the disrespectful fellow, wheeling about on his heel, as he grapsit the sneck of the shop door, and gaed a

grin that showed the only clean pairts of his body—to wit, the whites o' his een, and his sharp teeth,—“Ower little!—Pu, pu!—He’s like the blackamoor’s pig, then, Maister Wauch,—he’s like the blackamoor’s pig—he may be ver’ little, but he be tam ould;” and with this he showed his back, clapping the door at his tail without wishing a good day; and I am scarcely sorry when I confess that I never cuttit claih for either father or son from that day to this ane, the losing of such a customer being no great matter at best, and amait clear gain, compared with saddling mysel wi’ a callant with only ae ee and ae leg, the tane having fa’en a victim to the dregs of the measles, and the ither having been harled aff wi’ a farmer’s threshing-mill. However, I got mysel properly suited.—But ye shall hear.

Our neighbour, Mrs Grassie, a widow woman, unco intimate wi’ our wife, and very attentive to Benjie when he had the chincough, had a far-away cousin o’ the name o’ Glen, that haddit out amang the howes of the Lammermoor hills—a distant part of the country, ye observe. Auld Glen, a decent-looking body of a creature, had come in wi’ his sheltie about some private matters of business—such as the buying of a horse, or something to that effect, where he could best fa’ in wi’t, either at our fair, or the Grassmarket, or sic like; so he had up-pitting free of expense from Mrs Grassie, on account of his relationship, Glen being second cousin to Mrs Grassie’s brother’s wife, wha is deceased. I might, indeed, have mentioned, that our neighbour hersel had been twice married, and had the misery of seeing out baith her gudemen; but sic was the will of fate, and she bore up with perfect resignation.

Having made a bit warm dinner ready—for she was a tidy body, and kent what was what—she thought she couldna do better than ask in a reput-

able neighbour to help her friend to eat it, and take a cheerer wi’ him; as, maybe, being a stranger here, he wouldna like to use the freedom of drinking by himself—a custom which is at the best an unsocial ane—especially wi’ name but women-folk near him, so she did me the honour to make choice of me, though I say’t, wha shouldna say’t; and when we got our jug filled for the second time, and began to grow better acquainted, ye would just wonder to see how we became merry, and crackit away just like twa pen-guns. I asked him, ye see, about sheep and cows, and corn and hay, and ploughing and thrashing, and horses and carts, and fallow land, and lambing-time, and har’st, and making cheese and butter, and selling eggs, and curing the sturdie, and the snifters, and the batts, and sic like; and he, in his turn, made enquiry regarding broad and narrow claih, Kilmarnock cowls, worsted comforters, Shetland hose, mittens, leather caps, stuffing and padding, metal and mule-buttons, thorls, pocket-linings, serge, twist, buckram, shaping, and sewing, back-splaying, rund-gooseing, measuring, and all the ither particulars belanging to our trade, which he said, at lang and last, after we had jokit thegither, was a power better ane than the farm-ing.

“Ye should mak yer son ane, then,” said I, “if ye think sae. Have ye ony bairns?”

“Ye’ve het the nail on the head. ‘Od, man, if ye wasna sae far away, I would bind our auldest callant to yersel, I’m sae weel pleased wi’ yer gentlemanly manners. But I’m speaking havers.”

“Havershere or havers there; what,” said I, “is to prevent ye boarding him, at a cheap rate, either wi’ our friend Mrs Grassie, or wi’ the wife? Either of the twa wad be a sort of mother till him.”

“Deed, I daursay they would,” an-

swered Maister Glen, stroking his chin, which was gey rough, and hadna got a clean sin' Sunday, having had four days of sheer growth—our meeting, ye'll observe by this, being on the Thursday afternoon—"Deed would they. 'Od, I maun speak to the mistress about it."

On the head of this we had anither jug, three being cannie, after which we were baith a wee tozy-mozy; so I daur-say Mrs Grassie saw plainly that we were getting into a state where we wad not easily make a halt; so, without letting on, she brought in the tea things before us, and showed us a play-bill, to tell us that a company of strolling play-actors had come in a body in the morning, with a hale cartful of scenery and grand dresses, and were to make an exhibition at seven o'clock, at the ransom of a shilling a head, in Laird Wheatley's barn.

Mony a time and often had I heard of play-acting, and of players making themselves kings and queens, and saying a great many wonderful things; but I had never before an opportunity of making mysel a witness to the truth of these hearsays. So Maister Glen being as fu' o' nonsense, and as fain to have his curiosity gratified as mysel, we took upon us the stout resolution to gang out thegither, he offering to treat me, and I determined to rin the risk of Maister Wiggie our minister's rebuke for the transgression, hoping it would make no lasting impression on his mind, being for the first and only time. Folks shouldna at a' times be ower scrupulous.

After paying our money at the door, never, while I live and breathe, will I forget what we saw and heard that night; it just looks to me, by all the world, when I think on't, like a fairy dream. The place was crowded to the full; Maister Glen and me having nearly got our ribs dung in before we fand a seat, and them behint were obliged to mount the back benches to get a sight. Right to the forehand of us was a large

green curtain, some five or six ells wide, a guid deal the waur of the wear, having seen service through twa three simmers; and, just in the front of it, were eight or ten penny candles stuck in a board fastened to the ground, to let us see the players' feet like, when they came on the stage,—and even before they came on the stage,—for the curtain being scrimpit in length, we saw legs and feet moving behind the scenes very neatly; while twa blind fiddlers they had brought with them played the bonniest ye ever heard. 'Od, the very music was worth a six-pence of itsel.

The place, as I said before, was choke-full, just to excess, so that one could scarcely breathe. Indeed, I never saw ony part sae crowded, not even at a tent-preaching, when the Rev. Mr Roarer was giving his discourses on the building of Solomon's Temple. We were obligated to have the windows opened for a mouthful of fresh air, the barn being as close as a baker's oven, my neighbour and me fanning our red faces wi' our hats, to keep us cool; and, though all were half stewed, we certainly had the worst o't,—the toddy we had ta'en having fermented the blood of our bodies into a perfect fever.

Just at the time that the twa blind fiddles were playing "The Downfall of Paris," a handbell rang, and up goes the green curtain; being hauled to the ceiling, as I observed wi' the tail of my ee, by a birkie at the side, that had haud of a rope. So, on the music stopping, and all becoming as still as that you might have heard a pin fall, in comes a decent old gentleman at his leisure, weel powthered, wi' an auld fashioned coat on, waistcoat with flap-pockets, brown breeches with buckles at the knees, and silk stockings with red gushets on a blue ground. I never saw a man in sic distress; he stampit about, dadding the end of his staff on the ground, and imploring all the powers of heaven and yearth to help

him to find out his runawa' daughter, that had decampit wi' some ne'er-do-wel loon of a half-pay captain, that keppit her in his arms frae her bedroom window, up twa pair o' stairs. Every father and head of a family maun hae felt for a man in his situation, thus to be rabbit of his dear bairn, and an only daughter too, as he tell't us ower and ower again, as the saut, saut tears ran gushing down his withered face, and he aye blew his nose on his clean calendered pocket napkin. But, ye ken, the thing was absurd to suppose that we should ken onything about the matter, having never seen either him or his daughter between the een afore, and no kenning them by headmark ; so though we sympathised with him, as folks ought to do wi' a fellow-creature in affliction, we thought it best to haud our tongues, to see what might cast up better than he expected. So out he gaed stumping at the ither side, determined, he said, to find them out, though he should follow them to the world's end, Johnny Groat's House, or something to that effect.

Hardly was his back turned, and amaist before ye could cry Jack Robinson, in comes the birkie and the very young leddy the auld gentleman described, arm-in-arm thegither, smoodging and lauching like daft. Dog on it ! it was a shameless piece of business. As true as death, before all the crowd of folk, he pat his arm round her waist, and ca'ed her his sweatheart, and love, and dearie, and darling, and everything that is sweet. If they had been courting in a close thegither on a Friday night, they couldna hae said mair to ane anither, or gaen greater lengths. I thought sic shame to be an ee-witness to sic ongoings, that I was obliged at last to haud up my hat afore my face, and look down ; though, for a' that, the young lad, to be sic a blackguard as his conduct showed, was weel enough faured, and had a gude coat to his back, wi'

double - gilt buttons, and fashionable lapells, to say little of a very weel-made pair of buckskins, a little the waur o' the wear to be sure, but which, if they had been weel cleaned, would hae lookit amaist as gude as new. How they had come we never could learn, as we neither saw chaise nor gig ; but, from his having spurs on his boots, it is mair than likely they had lightit at the back-door of the barn frae a horse, she riding on a pad behint him, maybe with her hand round his waist.

The faither lookit to be a rich auld bool, baith from his manner of speaking and the rewards he seemed to offer for the apprehension of his daughter ; but, to be sure, when so many of us were present, that had an equal right to the spulzie, it wadna be a great deal a thousand pounds when divided, still it was worth the looking after ; so we just bidit a wee.

Things were brought to a bearing, howsomever, sooner than either themselves, I daursay, or anybody else present, seemed to hae the least glimpse of ; for, just in the middle of their fine goings-on, the sound of a coming fit was heard, and the lassie taking guilt to her, cried out, " Hide me, hide me, for the sake of gudeness, for yonder comes my auld faither ! "

Nae sooner said than done. In he stappit her into a closet ; and after shutting the door on her, he sat down upon a chair, pretending to be asleep in a moment. The auld faither came bouncing in, and seeing the fellow as sound as a tap, he ran forrit and gaed him sic a shake, as if he wad hae shooke him a' sundry, which sune made him open his een as fast as he had steekit them.

After blackguarding the chield at no allowance, cursing him up hill and down dale, and ca'ing him every name but a gentleman, he held his staff ower his crown, and gripping him by the cuff o' the neck, askit him what he had made o' his daughter. Never

since I was born did I ever see sic brazen-faced impudence. The rascal had the brass to say at ance, that he hadn'a seen word or wittens of his daughter for a month, though mair than a hundred folks sitting in his company had seen him daunting her with his arm round her jimp' waist not five minutes before. As a man, as a father, as an elder of our kirk, my corruption was raised,—for I aye hated leeing, as a puir cowardly sin, and an inbreak on the ten commandments ; and I found my neebour, Mr Glen, fidgeting on the seat as well as me, so I thocht that whaever spoke first wad hae the best right to be entitled to the reward ; whereupon, just as he was in the act of rising up, I took the word out of his mouth, saying, “Dinna believe him, auld gentleman—dinna believe him, friend ; he's telling a parcel of lees. Never saw her for a month ! It's no worth arguing, or ca'ing witnesses ; just open that press door, and ye'll see whether I'm speaking truth or no.”

The auld man stared, and lookit dumfounded ; and the young man, instead of rinnin' forrit wi' his doubled nieves to strike me—the only thing I was feared for—began a lauching, as if I had dune him a gude turn. But never since I had a being, did ever I witness sic an uproar and noise as immediately took place. The hale house was sae glad that the scoundrel had been exposed, that they set up siccán a roar o' lauchter, and they thumpit away at siccán a rate at the boards wi' their feet, that at lang and last, wi' pushing and fidgeting, clapping their hands, and hadding their sides, down fell the place they ca' the gallery, a' the folk in't being hurled tapsy-turvy, head foremost amang the sawdust on the floor below ; their guffawing suné being turned to howling, ilka ane crying louder than anither at the tap of their voices, “Murder ! Murder ! haud aff me. Murder, my ribsare in. Murder ! I'm killed—I'm speechless !” and ither

lamentations to that effect ; so that a rush to the door took place, in which everything was overturned—the door-keeper being wheeled away like wildfire ; the furms strampit to pieces ; the lights knockit out ; and the twa blind fiddlers dung head foremost ower the stage, the bass fiddle cracking like thunder at every bruise. Siccán tearing and swearing, and tumbling and squealing, was never witnessed in the memory of man, since the building of Babel ; legs being likely to be broken, sides staved in, een knocked out, and lives lost ; there being only one door, and that a sma' ane ; so that, when we had been carried aff our feet that length, my wind was fairly gane, and a sick dwalm cam ower me, lights of a' manner of colours, red, blue, green, and orange, dancing before me, that entirely deprived me o' my common sense, till on opening my een in the dark, I fand myself leaning wi' my braid side against the wa' on the opposite side of the close. It was some time before I mindit what had happened ; so, dreading scaith, I fand first the ae arm, and then the ither, to see if they were broken—syne my head—and syne baith o' my legs ; but a' as weel as I could discover was skin-hale and scart-free ; on perceiving which, my joy was without bounds, having a great notion that I had been killed on the spot. So I reached round my hand very thankfully to tak out my pocket napkin, to gie my brow a wipe, when, lo and behold, the tail of my Sunday's coat was fairly aff an' away—dockit by the hench buttons.

Sae muckle for plays and play-actors—the first and last, I trust in grace, that I shall ever see. But indeed I could expect nae better, after the warning that Maister Wiggie had mair than ance gien us frae the puppit on the subject ; sae, instead of getting my grand reward for finding the auld man's daughter, the hale covey o' them, nae better than a set of swindlers, took leg-

bail, and made that very night a moon-light flitting, and Johnny Hammer, honest man, that had wrought frae sunrise to sunset, for twa days, fitting up their

place by contract, instead of being well paid for his trouble, as he deserved, got naething left him but a rakkle of his own gude deals, a' dung to shivers.

JANE MALCOLM:

A VILLAGE TALE.

EVERY town in Scotland has its “character,” in the shape of some bedlamite, innocent, or odd fish. There is something interesting about these out-of-the-way beings. Everything they do is a kind of current chapter of biography among their neighbours ;—what they say is regarded as the words of an oracle—more worthy of memory than the inquiries of the laird or the advice of the parson. They are in a manner immortalised.

Having, in the course of different summers, taken up a short residence in some of the smaller borough towns and villages scattered through Scotland, I took no small delight in observing the peculiarities of many of those objects of compassion, and in tracing the source of that dismal malady which laid prostrate the edifice of reason, and arrested the harmonious mechanism of an organized mind. The task was sometimes of a melancholy nature : I found histories—real histories—turning upon incidents the most tragical, and only wonder they are so little known, and meet with such slender sympathy. The crisis of a well-written romance brings out more tears than were ever shed for the fall of man ; but never have I read of anything so pathetic as was developed in the following sketch—a sketch which the pen of a Scott could do little to adorn. The naked truth of the story is a series of catastrophes, a parallel to which imagination seldom produces.

It was told me by a sister of the unfortunate female who figures so conspicuously in it.

Jane Malcolm was the daughter of a lint-mill proprietor in the small town of K——n. Her father, being a wealthy man, held for a long time the provostship of the place—a Scottish burgh. His family consisted of two daughters and a son. Jane was the youngest of these, and her father's favourite. There was something about the girl extremely attractive ; she possessed all the advantages of personal beauty, combined with a gentleness of disposition and quickness of understanding, that wrought upon the affections of all she knew. At the manse she was peculiarly beloved ; the good old minister recognised in her the image of one he had lost ; the illusion strengthened as she grew up, and Jane Malcolm was as much an inmate there as she was in the house of her father. A few years saw her removed to Edinburgh, to finish an education imperfectly carried on under the superintendence of a village governess. She returned graceful and accomplished, to be looked up to by all her former companions. But Jane was not proud ;—her early friendships she disdained to supplant by a feeling so unworthy—so unlike herself. Her over-bending nature, indeed, was her fault: it brought the vulgar and undiscerning mind into too much familiarity with her own. It became the cause of all her misery.

Among those most intimate with her was one Margaret Innes, a young and lively girl, but far below Jane's rank in life. The daughter of an aged fisherman, it was not uncommon for Jane to find her employed in offices the most menial. For all this she loved her not the less. The affection and humble virtues of Margaret amply repaid Jane for her condescension. Mr Malcolm himself saw no harm in this growing friendship, marked, as it was, with such a strong disparity of situation. But he overlooked the circumstance that Margaret Innes had a brother, a handsome, fearless lad. A sailor by profession, it is true he was seldom at home, but though seldom, he was often enough for Jane to discover that his every return brought with it a stronger impression in his favour. When very young they were play-fellows together, and now when both were grown up, she could not refuse a smile or a word, whenever, after a long voyage, the light-hearted sailor returned to his native home. Sandy felt vain of her notice, but by no means attempted more familiarity than was consistent with his station. Without daring to love, he would have done anything to serve Miss Malcolm, and his readiness was not unfrequently put to the test.

Nothing Jane loved better than a short excursion upon the neighbouring sea. The boat of the old fisherman was often in request for this purpose, and he himself, accompanied by his daughter Margaret, made up the party on these occasions. When Sandy was at home, he supplied the place of his father, and his active and skilful hand directed many a pleasant voyage—made more pleasant by a fund of amusing anecdotes and adventures picked up in the course of his travels. One afternoon, on the day after his return from the coast of Norway, this little group had embarked to enjoy the delightful freshness of the sea-breeze, after a noon of intolerable

heat. Standing up to gaze at a flock of sea-birds, collected for the purpose of devouring the small fry of the herring which at that season visited the coast, Jane Malcolm accidentally fell into the water. The boat receded rapidly from the spot, its sail being filled by the wind. Immediately, however, Sandy Innes swam towards the terrified girl. She clung to him for support. It was no easy matter to reach the boat, carried along as it was by the breeze, and not till Margaret had recovered from her first alarm, was she able, by turning the helm, to give them the required assistance. They were soon safe. This adventure called forth the liveliest feelings of gratitude on the part of Jane Malcolm. She regarded the youthful sailor as her preserver, and thought no recompence too liberal for the service he had rendered. Imprudently she revealed to his sister the secret of her growing attachment. Margaret was too generous all at once to give her brother the advantage offered. She reasoned with Jane on the impropriety—the unsuitableness of such a union as was hinted at; and, to render it impracticable for the present, she induced Sandy to engage with a ship bound for North America. Accordingly, he again left the country.

Miss Malcolm was not to be deterred. She upbraided Margaret for her want of feeling; and, in short, took it so much to heart, that the poor girl, on Sandy's return, was, out of self-defence, obliged to communicate to him the tidings she willingly would have hid. To be brief, they were married without Mr Malcolm's consent. This was a blow the old man never got over; he died a few days after the ceremony. His only son had just returned from England, a lieutenant in the army; alas! it was to lay in the grave the remains of a heart-broken father. Enraged at the cause of this melancholy blow, he vowed revenge against the innocent intruder into his

domestic peace. The feelings of his unhappy sister he thought no sacrifice to win retaliation ; the step she had already taken showed them, in his eye, to be blunted and incapable of injury. To have challenged one so much his inferior never entered into his mind ; he brooded over a purpose more dark and sanguinary, though less consistent with his honour. His design was to have the husband of his sister murdered, and he appears to have formed it without a moment's hesitation. Professing regard for his new brother-in-law, he pretended to be reconciled to the unfortunate marriage, and even divided with him and his other sister the patrimony of the deceased. This show of friendship had the effect of producing a seeming intimacy between them. Many a time they went out for a few hours upon fishing excursions, without any discovery being made by Sandy Innes of the growing hostility harboured by young Malcolm. One evening, however—the latter having, by various excuses, delayed their return to shore till after sunset—as the boat was lying quietly at anchor, about a mile from harbour, the unsuspecting sailor leant over to recover an oar which Malcolm had purposely dropped, when he found himself suddenly precipitated into the sea. In attempting to regain the vessel, he was driven back, and violently struck with the boat-hook, which his villainous brother-in-law had seized, with the intent to put the finish to his murderous treachery. In this, however, he was disappointed. Sandy Innes, with strong presence of mind, caught hold of the instrument, managing, at the same time, to overset the boat, and thus involve Malcolm in the same fate with himself. Both had a hard struggle for life ; but alas ! without success. Next morning the bodies of the two young men were discovered lying upon the beach. They were carried into Jane's habitation without her knowledge—the unfortunate girl having gone out to a differ-

ent part of the shore in quest of the boat, which, she fancied, had, by the wish of her brother, harboured all night at Inchkeith. When she returned, the first object that met her eyes was the body of her own dear husband—a cold corpse, with the long black hair hanging down over his once noble brow, and the dark eyes wide open, as if fixed in death upon her and heaven. A few days afterwards the young men were buried, side by side,—for a fearful story was whispered of Malcolm's guilt : how he was seen by the crew of a boat that had landed, without notice, upon a neighbouring rock, at the moment he attempted the atrocious deed. Their assistance, though instantly offered, was too late, for both had gone down ere they reached the spot.

After that sad catastrophe Jane was never herself. A fever carried away her intellects, and left her mind in ruins. Though possessed of a competency, it has never been used. The same weeds, though now reduced to rags, still cover her in her long and sorrowful widowhood. The last time I saw her, I saw a fearful picture—a beautiful female altered to a revolting spectacle of squalidness and deformity. She was gathering the shell-fish from among the brown layers of tangle, beyond the farthest ebb of the tide. Now and then she broke the shells with her teeth, muttering,—“We shall find him here—we shall find him here ;” and then she threw the shells round about her, with a sad sigh, as if her heart were longing to break, but felt chained up in a lone and weary prison. As I passed, I called to her—“Jane, this is a cold day, and you seem at cold work.” “Ay ! ay !” she replied, “and so are the worms ! But did ye see him ? Bonny Sandy ! If ye be gaun to the town, tell Meg Innes to come ; for he’s a wild laddie, and maybe she’ll ken whaur he’s hidden himself !” Poor creature, thought I, she will find rest in the grave !—*Edin. Lit. Jour.*

BOWED JOSEPH:

A LAST-CENTURY EDINBURGH "CHARACTER."

BY ROBERT CHAMBERS, LL.D.

THE mobs of Edinburgh have ever been celebrated as among the fiercest in Europe. The one which accomplished the death of Porteous, as narrated in the tale of the Heart of Midlothian, was a most surprising instance of popular vengeance, almost surpassing the bounds of belief; though it must sink considerably in our admiration, when we reflect upon the power and ferocity which at all periods have characterised the actions of this monstrous and danger-fraught collective. The time has been, when, in the words of the old song, "all Edinburgh" would "rise by thousands three," and present such a strength to the legal authorities, that all opposition to their capricious will would be in vain. In the younger days of many now living, even the boys of the High School, and of Heriot's Hospital, could erect themselves into a formidable body, equally resistless and indomitable. It is a fact, ludicrous enough too, that when the lads of these different schools were engaged in any of those squabbles, formerly so frequent and fatal, between them, they always showed a singular degree of political sagacity when assailed by the town-guard, in immediately joining their strengths, and combining against the common foe, when for the most part they succeeded in driving them from the scene of action. When such was the power of boys and striplings in this ill-protected city, and such the disorderliness of holiday assemblies, there is little left for wonder at the ravages committed by a mob formed of adults, actuated by violent feelings of jealousy, bigotry, and revenge.

Of this uncontrollable omnipotence of the populace, the annals of Edinburgh

present many fearful records. At the various periods of the Reformation and the Revolution, the Chapel of Roslin was destroyed by a mob, whose purpose neither cooled nor evaporated during a walk of eight miles. James the Sixth was besieged and threatened in his courts, and in the midst of his Parliaments, by a rabble of mechanics, who, but for the stout walls of the Tolbooth, might perhaps have taken his life. The fine chapel of Holyrood-house was pillaged of not only its furniture and other valuables, but also of the still more sacred bones which lay within its precincts, by a mob which rose at the Revolution, and did such deeds of violence and rapine as fanaticism and ignorance alone could have excited. At the unfortunate issue of the Dover expedition, at the execution of Captain Green, at the Union, and at many other events of less importance, the populace of Edinburgh distinguished themselves by insurrection and acts of outrage, such as have alone found parallels, perhaps, in the various transactions of the French Revolution. Even so late as 1812, there happened a foray of a most appalling nature; the sports of an occasion of rejoicing were converted into scenes of frightful riot, unexampled as they were unlooked for. The fatal melancholy catastrophe of this event, had, however, the good effect of quenching the spirit of licentiousness and blackguardism in the Edinburgh youth, and finally undermined that system of unity and promptitude in action and in council by which its mobs had so often triumphed in their terrible resolutions.

In this fierce democracy, there once arose a mighty leader, who contrived, by means of great boldness, sagacity, and other personal merits, to subject the

rabble to his will, and to elect himself dictator of all its motives and exploits. The person who thus found means to collect all the monstrous heads of the hydra within the grand grasp of his command was a little decrepit being, about four feet high, almost deprived of legs, and otherwise deformed. His name was Joseph Smith, or more commonly, "Bowed Joseph." He lived in Leith Wynd, and his trade as a private citizen was a buff belt maker. This singular being—low, miserable, and contemptible as he appeared—might be said to have had at one time the complete command of the metropolis of Scotland. Whenever any transaction took place in the Town Council which Joseph considered to be of very improper tendency ; whenever meal rose to whatever Joseph considered to be an improper price ; whenever anything occurred in the city which did not accord with Joseph's idea of right and wrong ; in short, "when they werna gude bairns," this hero could, in the course of an hour, collect a mob of ten thousand persons, all alike ready to execute his commands, or to disperse at his bidding. For this purpose, he is said to have employed a drum ; and never surely had "fiery cross" of the Highland cheftain such an effect upon the warlike devotion of his clan, as "Bowed Joseph's drum" had upon the *tinder* spirits of the Edinburgh rabble.

The "lazy corner" was a lazy corner no longer as he marched along—the "town rats," as they peeped forth like old cautious snails from their Patmos in the High Street, drew in their horns and shut their door as he approached—the West Bow ceased to clink as he descended. It seemed to be their enthusiasm to obey him in every order—whether to sack a granary, break the windows of an offensive magistrate, or to besiege the Town Council in their chamber. With all this absolute dominion over the affections and obedience of the mob, it is to be recorded to the

honour of Bowed Joseph, that however irregular the nature of his authority, he never in any of his actions could be said to have transgressed the bounds of propriety. With great natural sagacity, he possessed a clear and quick-sighted faculty of judgment. And the real philanthropy of his disposition was not less remarkable than his other singular qualities. He was, in short, an advocate for "fair play," as he called it, in everything. Fair play alone was the object of his government, and nothing else.

The following interesting story is handed down concerning Bowed Joseph, which proves his strong love of justice, as well as the humanity of his heart. A poor man in the Pleasance, from certain untoward circumstances, found it impossible to pay his rent at Martinmas ; and his hard-hearted landlord, refusing a portion of the same with a forlorn promise of the remainder being soon paid, sold off the whole effects of the tenant, and threw him, with a family of six children, in the most miserable condition upon the wide world. The unfortunate man, in a fit of despair, immediately put an end to his existence, by which the family were only rendered still more destitute. Bowed Joseph, however, did not long remain ignorant of the case. As soon as the affair became generally known throughout the city, he shouldered his drum, and after half-an-hour's beating through the streets, found himself followed by a mob of ten thousand people. With this enormous army he marched to an open space of ground, named in former times Thomson's Park, where, mounted on the shoulders of six of his lieutenant-generals, he harangued them in the true "Cambyses vein," concerning the flagrant and fatal proceedings for the redress of which they were assembled. He concluded by directing his men to seek the premises of the cruel landlord ; and as his house lay directly opposite the spot in the Pleasance, there was no time lost in executing his orders. The mob entered,

and seized upon every article of furniture that could be found, and in ten minutes the whole was packed in the park. Joseph set fire to the pile with his own hands, though the magistrates stood by with a guard of soldiers, and entreated him to desist. The eight-day clock is said to have struck twelve just as it was consigned to the flames.

When such was the strength and organisation of an Edinburgh mob so late as the year 1780, we need scarcely be surprised at the instance on which the tale of the Heart of Midlothian is founded, happening, as it did, at a much earlier period, and when the people were prompted to their terrible purpose by the sternest feelings of personal revenge.

In the exercise of his perilous office, it does not appear that Bowed Joseph ever drew down the vengeance of the more lawfully constituted authorities of the land. He was, on the contrary, in some degree countenanced by the magistrates of the city, who frequently sent for him to the Council Chamber, in cases of emergency, to consult him on the best means to be adopted for appeasing and dispersing the mob.

On an occasion of this moment, he was accustomed to look very large and consequential. With one hand carelessly applied to his side, and the other banged resolutely down upon the table, and with as much majesty as four feet of stature, and a beard of as many weeks old, could assume, and with as much turbulence in his fiery little eye, as if he was himself a mob, he would stand before them pleading the cause of his compeers, or directing the trembling Coun-

cil to the most expeditious method of assuaging their fury. The dismissal of a mob, on these occasions, was usually accomplished at the expense of a few hogsheads of ale, broached on the Calton Hill, and by the subsequent order of their decrepit general, expressed in the simple words, "Disperse, my lads."

Having for many years exercised an unlimited dominion over the affections of the rabble, Bowed Joseph met his death at last in a manner most unworthy of his character and great reputation. He fell from the top of a Leith coach in a state of intoxication, and broke his neck, which caused instantaneous death. He had been at the Leith races, and was on his return to Edinburgh when the accident took place ; and his skeleton has the honour of being preserved in the anatomical class-room of the College of Edinburgh.

An Edinburgh mob, although it may supply excellent subjects for tales, in all its characteristic fierceness and insubordination, is now a matter of mere antiquity. In the present day, the working classes of Edinburgh, from whom it may be supposed the principal materials of the mobs used to be drafted, are in the highest degree orderly, both in private conduct, and in their public appearances in bodies. The printing press, the schoolmaster, and that general improvement of manners which now prevails, have entirely altered the character of the populace, and any mischief now committed through the public uproar is seen to arise not from the adult, but the juvenile and neglected portion of the community.

THE LAIRD OF WINEHOLM.

BY JAMES HOGG, THE "ETTRICK SHEPHERD."

"HAVE you heard anything of the apparition which has been seen about Wineholm-place?" said the dominie.

"Na, I never heard o' sic a thing, as yet," quoth the smith; "but I wadna wonder muckle that the news should turn out to be true."

The dominie shook his head, and muttered, "h'm—h'm—h'm," as if he knew more than he was at liberty to tell.

"Weel, that beats the world," said the smith, as he gave up blowing the bellows, and looked over the spectacles at the dominie's face.

The dominie shook his head again.

The smith was now in the most ticklish quandary; eager to learn particulars, and spread the astounding news through the whole village, and the rest of the parish to boot, but yet afraid to press the inquiry, for fear the cautious dominie should take the alarm of being reported as a tattler, and keep all to himself. So the smith, after waiting till the wind-pipe of the great bellows ceased its rushing noise, and he had covered the gloss neatly up with a mixture of small coals, culm, and cinders; and then, perceiving that nothing more was forthcoming from the dominie, he began blowing again with more energy than before—changed his hand—put the other sooty one into his breeches-pocket—leaned to the horn—looked in a careless manner towards the window, or rather gazed on vacancy, and always now and then stole a sly look at the dominie's face. It was quite immovable. His cheek was leaned upon his open hand, and his eyes fixed on the glowing fire.

It was very teasing for poor Clinkum, the smith. But what could he do? He took out his glowing iron, and

made a shower of fire sweep through the whole smithy, whereof a good part, as intended, sputtered upon the dominie, but he only shielded his face with his elbow, turned his shoulder half round and held his peace. Thump—thump! clink—clink! went the hammer for a space; and then, when the iron was returned to the fire, "Weel, that beats the world!" quoth the smith.

"What is this that beats the world, Mr Clinkum?" said the dominie, with the most cool and provoking indifference.

"This story about the apparition," quoth the smith.

"What story?" said the dominie.

Now, really this insolence was hardly to be borne, even from the learned dominie, who, with all his cold indifference of feeling, was sitting toasting himself at a good smithy fire. The smith felt this, for he was a man of acute feeling, and therefore he spit upon his hand and fell a-clinking and pelting at the stithy with both spirit and resignation, saying within himself, "These dominie bodies just beat the world!"

"What story?" reiterated the dominie. "For my part I related no story, nor have ever given assent to a belief in such story that any man has heard. Nevertheless, from the results of rationacation, conclusions may be formed, though not algebraically, yet corporately by constituting a quantity, which shall be equivalent to the difference, subtracting the less from the greater, and striking a balance in order to get rid of any ambiguity or paradox."

At the long adverb, *nevertheless*, the smith gave over blowing, and pricked up his ears, but the definition went beyond his comprehension.

"Ye ken that just beats the whole

world for deepness," said the smith, and again began blowing the bellows.

" You know, Mr Clinkum," continued the dominie, " that a proposition is an assertion of some distinct truth, which only becomes manifest by demonstration. A corollary is an obvious, or easily inferred consequence of a proposition; while a hypothesis is a *supposition*, or concession made, during the process of demonstration. Now, do you take me along with you? Because, if you do not, it is needless to proceed."

" Yes, yes, I understand you middling weel; but I wad like better to hear what other folks say about it than you."

" And why so? Wherefore would you rather hear another man's demonstration than mine?" said the dominie, sternly.

" Because, ye ken, ye just beat the world for words," quoth the smith.

" Ay, ay! that is to say, words without wisdom," said the dominie, rising and stepping away. " Well, well, every man to his sphere, and the smith to his bellows."

" Ye're quite wrang, maister," cried the smith after him. " It isna the *want* o' wisdom in you that plagues me; it is the owerplush o't."

This soothed the dominie, who returned, and said mildly,—

" By-the-by, Clinkum, I want a leister of your making, for I see no other tradesman makes them so well. A five-grained one make it; at your own price."

" Very weel, sir. When will you be needing it?"

" Not till the end of the close time."

" Ay, ye may gar the three auld anes do till then."

" What do you wish to insinuate, sir? Would you infer, because I have three leisters, that therefore I am a breaker of the laws? That I, who am placed here as a pattern and monitor of

the young and rising generation, should be the first to set them an example of insubordination?"

" Ye ken, that just beats a' in words; but we ken what we ken, for a' that, maister."

" You had better take a little care what you say, Mr Clinkum; just a *little* care. I do not request you to take particular care, for of that your tongue is incapable, but a very little is a correlative of consequences. And mark you—don't go to say that I said this or that about a ghost, or mentioned such a ridiculous story."

" The crabbiness o' that body beats the world!" said the smith to himself, as the dominie went halting homeward.

The very next man who entered the smithy door was no other than John Broadcast, the new laird's hind, who had also been hind to the late laird for many years, and who had no sooner said his errand, than the smith addressed him thus:—

" Have you ever seen this ghost that there is such a noise about?"

" Ghost? Na, goodness be thankit! I never saw a ghost in my life, save ance a wraith. What ghost do you mean?"

" So you never saw nor heard tell of any apparition about Wineholm-place, lately?"

" No, I hae reason to be thankfu' I have not."

" Weel, that beats the world! Wow, man, but ye are sair in the dark! Do you no think there are siccans things in nature, as folk no coming fairly to their ends, John?"

" Goodness be wi' us! Ye gar a' the hairs o' my head creep, man. What's that you're saying?"

" Had ye never ony suspicions o' that kind, John?"

" No; I canna say that I had."

" None in the least? Weel, that beats the world!"

" O, haud your tongue—haud your

tongue ! We hae great reason to be thankfu' that we are as we are !”

“ How as you are ? ”

“ That we are nae stocks or stanes, or brute beasts, as the minister o’ Traquair says. But I hope in God there is nae siccán a thing about my master’s place as an unearthly visitor.”

The smith shook his head, and uttered a long hem ! hem ! hem ! He had felt the powerful effect of that himself, and wished to make the same appeal to the feelings and longings after information of John Broadcast. The bait took ; for the latent spark of superstition was kindled in the heart of honest John, and there being no wit in the head to counteract it, the portentous hint had its full sway. John’s eyes stelled in his head, and his visage grew long, assuming meanwhile something of the hue of dried clay in winter.

“ Hech, man ! but that’s an awsome story,” exclaimed he. “ Folks hae great reason to be thankfu’ that they are as they are. It is truly an awsome story.”

“ Ye ken, it just beats the world for that,” rejoined the smith.

“ And is it really thought that this laird made away wi’ our auld maister ? ” said John.

The smith shook his head again, and gave a straight wink with his eyes.

“ Weel, I hae great reason to be thankfu’ that I never heard siccán a story as that ! ” said John. “ Wha was it tauld you a’ about it ? ”

“ It was nae less a man than our mathewmatical dominie,” said the smith, “ he that kens a’ things, and can prove a proposition to the nineteenth part of a hair. But he is terrified lest the tale should spread ; and therefore ye maunna say a word about it.”

“ Na, na ; I hae great reason to be thankfu’ I can keep a secret as weel as the maist part of men, and better than the maist part of women. What did he say ? Tell us a’ that he said.”

“ It is not so easy to repeat what he

says, for he has sae mony lang-nebbit words. But he said, though it was only a supposition, yet it was easily made manifest by positive demonstration.”

“ Did you ever hear the like o’ that ? Now, have we no reason to be thankfu’ that we are as we are ? Did he say it was by poison that he was taken off, or that he was strangled ? ”

“ Na ; I thought he said it was by a collar, or collary, or something to that purpose.”

“ Then it wad appear there is no doubt of the horrid transaction ? I think the doctor has reason to be thankfu’ that he’s no taken up. Is no that strange ? ”

“ O, ye ken, it just beats the world.”

“ He deserves to be torn at young horses’ tails,” said the ploughman.

“ Ay, or nippit to death with red-hot pinchers,” quoth the smith.

“ Or harrowed to death, like the children of Ammon,” said the ploughman.

“ Na, I’ll tell you what should be done wi’ him—he should just be docked, and fired like a farcied horse,” quoth the smith. “ ‘Od help ye, man, I could beat the world for laying on a proper punishment ! ”

John Broadcast went home full of terror and dismay. He told his wife the story in a secret—she told the dairy-maid with a tenfold degree of secrecy ; and as Dr Davington, or the New Laird, as he was called, sometimes kissed the pretty dairy-maid for amusement, it gave her a great deal of freedom with her master, so she went straight and told him the whole story to his face. He was unusually affected at hearing such a terrible accusation against himself, and changed colour again and again ; and as pretty Martha, the dairy-maid, supposed it was from anger, she fell to abusing the dominie without mercy—for he was session-clerk, and had been giving her some hints about her morality of which she did not approve. She

therefore threw the whole blame upon him, assuring her master that he was the most spiteful and malicious man on the face of the earth ; "and to show you that, sir," added Martha, wiping her eyes, "he has spread it through the hale parish that you and I baith deserve to sit wi' the sacking-gown on us."

This enraged the doctor still farther, and he forthwith dispatched Martha to desire the dominie to come up to the Place to speak with her master, as he had something to say to him. Martha went, and delivered her message in so insulting a manner, that the dominie suspected there was bad blood a-brewing against him ; and as he had too much self-importance to think of succumbing to any man alive, he sent an impertinent answer to the laird's message, bearing that if Dr Davington had any business with him, he would be so good as attend at his class-room when he dismissed his scholars. And then he added, waving his hand towards the door, "Go out. There is contamination in your presence. What hath such a vulgar fraction ado to come into the halls of uprightness and science ?"

When this message was delivered, the doctor, being almost beside himself with rage, instantly dispatched two village constables with a warrant to seize the dominie, and bring him before him, for the doctor was a justice of the peace. Accordingly, the poor dominie was seized at the head of his pupils, and dragged away, crutch and all, up before the new laird, to answer for such an abominable slander. The dominie denied everything anent it, as indeed he might, save having asked the smith the simple question, "if he had heard aught of a ghost at the Place ?" But he refused to tell *why* he had asked that question. He had his own reasons for it, he said, and reasons that to him were quite sufficient ; but as he was not obliged to disclose them, neither would he.

The smith was then sent for, who declared that the dominie had told him of the ghost being seen, and a murder committed, which he called a *rash assassination*, and said it was obvious and easily inferred that it was done by a collar.

How the dominie did storm ! He even twice threatened to knock down the smith with his crutch ; not for the slander,—he cared not for that nor the doctor a pin, but for the total subversion of his grand illustration from geometry ; and he, therefore, denominated the smith's head *the logarithm to number one*, a reproach of which I do not understand the gist, but the appropriation of it pleased the dominie exceedingly, made him chuckle, and put him in better humour for a good while. It was in vain that he tried to prove that his words applied only to the definition of a problem in geometry,—he could not make himself understood ; and the smith maintaining his point firmly, and apparently with conscientious truth, appearances were greatly against the dominie, and the doctor pronounced him a malevolent and dangerous person.

"O, ye ken, he just beats the world for that," quoth the smith.

"I a malevolent and dangerous person, sir !" said the dominie, fiercely, and altering his crutch from one place to another of the floor, as if he could not get a place to set it on. "Dost thou call me a malevolent and dangerous person, sir ? what, then, art thou ? If thou knowest not, I will tell thee. Add a cipher to a ninth figure, and what does that make ? Ninety you will say. Ay, but then put a cipher *above* a nine, and what does that make ? Ha—ha—ha—I have you there ! Your case exactly in higher geometry ! For say the chord of sixty degrees is radius, then the sine of ninety degrees is equal to the radius, so the secant of o (that is nihil-nothing, as the boys call it), is radius, and so is the co-sine of o. The

versed sine of ninety degrees is radius (that is nine with a cipher added, you know), and the versed sine of 180 degrees is the diameter ; then, of course, the sine increases from nought (that is, cipher or nothing) till it becomes radius, and then it decreases till it becomes nothing. After this you note it lies on the *contrary* side of the diameter, and consequently, if positive before, is negative now ; so that it must end in 0, or a cipher above a nine at most."

" This unintelligible jargon is out of place here, Mr Dominie ; and if you can show no better reasons for raising such an abominable falsehood, in representing me as an incendiary and murderer, I shall procure you a lodging in the house of correction."

" Why, sir, the long and the short of the matter is this :—I only asked at that fellow there—that logarithm of stupidity—if he had heard aught of a ghost having been seen about Wineholm Place. I added nothing farther, either positive or negative. Now, do you insist on my reasons for asking such a question ? "

" I insist on having them."

" Then what will you say, sir, when I inform you, and declare my readiness to depone to the truth of it, that I saw the ghost myself ? Yes, sir, that I saw the ghost of your late worthy father-in-law myself, sir ; and though I said no such thing to that decimal fraction, yet it told me, sir,—yes, the spirit of your father-in-law told me, sir, that you are a murderer."

" Lord, now, what think ye o' that ? " quoth the smith. " Ye had better hae lettin him alone ; for, 'od, ye ken, he's the deevil of a body as ever was made. He just beats the world ! "

The doctor grew as pale as death, but whether from fear or rage, it was hard to say.

" Why, sir," said he, " you are mad ! stark, raving mad ; therefore, for your own credit, and for the peace and com-

fort of my wife and myself, and our credit among our retainers, you must unsay every word that you have now said."

" I'll just as soon say that the parabola and the ellipsis are the same," said the dominie ; " or that the diameter is not the longest line that can be drawn in the circle. And now, sir, since you have forced me to divulge what I was much in doubt about, I have a great mind to have the old laird's grave opened to-night, and have the body inspected before witnesses."

" If you dare disturb the sanctuary of the grave," said the doctor vehemently, " or with your unhallowed hands touch the remains of my venerable and revered predecessor, it had been better for you, and all who make the attempt, that you never had been born. If not then for my sake, for the sake of my wife, the sole daughter of the man to whom you have all been obliged, let this abominable and malicious calumny go no farther, but put it down ; I pray of you to put it down, as you would value your own advantage."

" I have seen him, and spoke with him—that I aver," said the dominie. " And shall I tell you what he said to me ? "

" No, no ! I'll hear no more of such absolute and disgusting nonsense," said the doctor.

" Then, since it hath come to this, I will declare it in the face of the whole world, and pursue it to the last," said the dominie, " ridiculous as it is, and I confess that it is even so. I have seen your father-in-law within the last twenty-four hours ; at least a being in his form and habiliments, and having his aspect and voice. And he told me that he believed you were a very great scoundrel, and that you had helped him off the stage of time in a great haste, for fear of the operation of a will, which he had just executed, very much to your prejudice. I was somewhat aghast, but

ventured to remark, that he must surely have been sensible whether you murdered him or not, and in what way. He replied that he was not very certain, for at the time you put him down, he was much in his customary way of nights—very drunk ; but that he greatly suspected you had hanged him, for ever since he had died, he had been troubled with a severe crick in his neck. Having seen my late worthy patron's body deposited in the coffin, and afterwards consigned to the grave, these things overcame me, and a kind of mist came over my senses ; but I heard him saying as he withdrew, what a pity it was that my nerves could not stand this disclosure ! Now, for my own satisfaction, I am resolved that, to-morrow, I shall raise the village, with the two ministers at the head of the multitude, and have the body, and particularly the neck of the deceased, minutely inspected."

"If you do so, I shall make one of the number," said the doctor. "But I am resolved that, in the first place, every means shall be tried to prevent a scene of madness and absurdity so disgraceful to a well-regulated village and a sober community."

"There is but one direct line that can be followed, and any other would either form an acute or obtuse angle," said the dominie ; "therefore I am resolved to proceed right forward, on mathematical principles ;" and away he went, skipping on his crutch, to arouse the villagers to the scrutiny.

The smith remained behind, concerting with the doctor how to controvert the dominie's profound scheme of unshrouding the dead ; and certainly the smith's plan, viewed professionally, was not amiss—

"O, ye ken, sir, we maun just gie him another heat, and try to saften him to reason, for he's just as stubborn as Muirkirk airn. He beats the world for that."

While the two were in confabulation,

Johnston, the old house servant, came in, and said to the doctor—

"Sir, your servants are going to leave the house, every one, this night, if you cannot fall on some means to divert them from it. The old laird is, it seems, risen again, and come back among them, and they are all in the utmost consternation. Indeed, they are quite out of their reason. He appeared in the stable to Broadcast, who has been these two hours dead with terror, but is now recovered, and telling such a tale downstairs as never was heard from the mouth of man."

"Send him up here," said the doctor. "I will silence him. What does the ignorant clown mean by joining in this unnatural clamour ?"

John came up, with his broad bonnet in his hand, shut the door with hesitation, and then felt thrice with his hand if it was really shut.

"Well, John," said the doctor, "what absurd lie is this that you are vending among your fellow-servants, of having seen a ghost ?"

John picked some odds and ends of threads out of his bonnet, and said nothing.

"You are an old superstitious dreaming dotard," continued the doctor ; "but if you propose in future to manufacture such stories, you must, from this instant, do it somewhere else than in my service, and among my domestics. What have you to say for yourself ?"

"Indeed, sir, I hae naething to say but this, that we hae a' muckle reason to be thankfu' that we are as we are."

"And whereon does that wise saw bear ? What relation has that to the seeing of a ghost ? Confess then, this instant, that you have forged and vended a deliberate lie."

"Indeed, sir, I hae muckle reason to be thankfu'—"

"For what ?"

"That I never tauld a deliberate lie in my life. My late master came and

spoke to me in the stable; but whether it was his ghaist or himself—a good angel or a bad ane—I hae reason to be thankfu' I never said; for I do—not—ken."

"Now, pray let us hear from that sage tongue of yours, so full of sublime adages, what this doubtful being said to you?"

"I wad rather be excused, an' it were your honour's will, and wad hae reason to be thankfu'."

"And why should you decline telling this?"

"Because I ken ye wadna believe a word o't, it is siccān a strange story. O, sirs, but folks hae muckle reason to be thankful that they are as they are!"

"Well, out with this strange story of yours. I do not promise to credit it, but shall give it a patient hearing, providing you swear that there is no forgery in it."

"Weel, as I was suppering the horses the night, I was dressing my late kind master's favourite mare, and I was just thinking to mysel, an' he had been leev-ing, I wadna hae been my lane the night, for he wad hae been standing ower me, cracking his jokes, and swearing at me in his good-natured hamely way. Ay, but he's gane to his lang account, thinks I, and we puir frail dying creatures that are left ahint, hae muckle reason to be thankfu' that we are as we are; when I looks up, and behold there's my auld master standing leaning against the trivage as he used to do, and looking at me. I canna but say my heart was a little astoundit, and maybe lap up through my midriff into my breath-bellows—I couldna say; but in the strength o' the Lord I was enabled to retain my senses for a good while. 'John Broadcast,' said he, with a deep angry tone,—'John Broadcast, what the d—l are you thinking about? You are not currying that mare half. What lubberly way of dressing a horse is that?'

"Lord make us thankfu', master," says I; "are you there?"

"Where else would you have me be at this hour of the night, old blockhead?" says he.

"In another hame than this, master," says I; "but I fear it is nae good ane, that ye are sae soon tired o't."

"A d—d bad one, I assure you," says he.

"Ay, but master," says I, "ye hae muckle reason to be thankfu' that ye are as ye are."

"In what respect, dotard?" says he.

"That ye hae liberty to come out o't a start now and then to get the air," says I; and oh, my heart was sair for him when I thought o' his state! And though I was thankfu' that I was as I was, my heart and flesh began to fail me, at thinking of my speaking face to face wi' a being frae the unhappy place. But out he breaks again wi' a great round o' swearing, about the mare being ill-keepit; and he ordered me to cast my coat and curry her weel, for he had a lang journey to take on her the morn.

"You take a journey on her!" says I; "I doubt my new master will dispute that privilege wi' you, for he rides her himself the morn."

"He ride her!" cried the angry spirit; and then he burst out into a lang string of imprecations, fearsome to hear, against you, sir; and then added, 'Soon, soon, shall he be levelled with the dust!—the dog! the parricide! First to betray my child, and then to put down myself! But he shall not escape—he shall not escape!' he cried with such a hellish growl that I fainted, and heard no more."

"Weel, that beats the world," exclaimed the smith. "I wad hae thought the mare wad hae luppen ower yird and stane, or fa'en down dead wi' fright."

"Na, na," said John, "in place o' that, whenever she heard him fa' a swearing, she was sae glad that she fell a nichering."

"Na, but that beats the hale world a' thegither!" quoth the smith. "Then it has been nae ghaist ava, ye may depend on that."

"I little wat what it was," replied John, "but it was a being in nae guude or happy state o' mind, and is a warning to us how muckle reason we hae to be thankfu' that we are as we are."

The doctor pretended to laugh at the absurdity of John's narration, but it was with a ghastly and doubtful expression of countenance, as though he thought the story far too ridiculous for any clod-poll to have contrived out of his own head; and forthwith he dismissed the two dealers in the marvellous, with very little ceremony, the one protesting that the thing beat the world, and the other that they had both reason to be thankful that they were as they were.

Next morning the villagers, small and great, were assembled at an early hour to witness the lifting of the body of the late laird, and, headed by the established and dissenting clergymen, and two surgeons, they proceeded to the tomb, and soon extracted the splendid coffin, which they opened with all due caution and ceremony. But instead of the murdered body of their late benefactor, which they expected in good earnest to find, there was nothing in the coffin but a layer of gravel, of about the weight of a corpulent man.

The clamour against the new laird then rose all at once into a tumult that it was impossible to check, every one declaring that he had not only murdered their benefactor, but, for fear of discovery, had raised the body, and given, or rather sold it, for dissection. The thing was not to be tolerated; so the mob proceeded in a body to Wineholm Place, to take out their poor deluded lady, and burn the doctor and his basely acquired habitation to ashes. It was not till the multitude had surrounded the house that the ministers and two or three other gentlemen could stay them,

which they only did by assuring the mob that they would bring out the doctor before their eyes, and deliver him up to justice. This pacified the throng; but on inquiry at the hall, it was found that the doctor had gone off early that morning, so that nothing further could be done for the present. But the coffin, filled with gravel, was laid up in the aisle, and kept open for inspection.

Nothing could now exceed the consternation of the simple villagers of Wineholm at these dark and mysterious events. Business, labour, and employment of every sort, were at a stand, and the people hurried about to one another's houses, and mingled their conjectures together in one heterogeneous mass. The smith put his hand to his bellows, but forgot to blow till the fire went out; the weaver leaned on his loom, and listened to the legend of the ghastly tailor. The team stood in mid-furrow, and the thrasher agape over his flail; and even the dominie was heard to declare that the geometrical series of events was increasing by no *common* ratio, and therefore ought to be calculated rather arithmetically than by logarithms; and John Broadcast saw more and more reason for being thankfu' that he was as he was, and neither a stock, nor a stone, nor a brute beast.

Every new thing that happened was more extraordinary than the last; and the most puzzling of all was the circumstance of the late laird's mare, saddle, bridle, and all, being off before daylight next morning; so that Dr Davington was obliged to have recourse to his own, on which he was seen posting away on the road towards Edinburgh. It was thus but too obvious that the late laird had ridden off on his favourite mare,—but whither, none of the sages of Wineholm could divine. But their souls grew chill as an iceberg, and their very frames rigid, at the thought of a spirit riding away on a brute beast to the place appointed for wicked men. And

had not John Broadcast reason to be thankfu' that he was as he was?

However, the outcry of the community became so outrageous of murder and foul play, in so many ways, that the officers of justice were compelled to take note of it; and accordingly the sheriff-substitute, the sheriff-clerk, the fiscal, and two assistants, came in two chaises to Wineholm to take a precognition; and there a court was held which lasted the whole day, at which Mrs Davington, the late laird's only daughter, all the servants, and a great number of the villagers, were examined on oath. It appeared from the evidence that Dr Davington had come to the village and set up as a surgeon; that he had used every endeavour to be employed in the laird's family in vain, as the latter detested him; that he, however, found means of inducing his only daughter to elope with him, which put the laird quite beside himself, and from thenceforward he became drowned in dissipation; that such, however, was his affection for his daughter, that he caused her to live with him, but would never suffer the doctor to enter his door; that it was, nevertheless, quite customary for the doctor to be sent for to his lady's chamber, particularly when her father was in his cups; and that on a certain night, when the laird had had company, and was so overcome that he could not rise from his chair, he had died suddenly of apoplexy; and that no other skill was sent for, or near him, but this his detested son-in-law, whom he had by will disinherited, though the legal term for rendering that will competent had not expired. The body was confined the second day after death, and locked up in a low room in one of the wings of the building; and nothing farther could be elicited. The doctor was missing, and it was whispered that he had absconded; indeed it was evident, and the sheriff acknowledged that, according to the evidence taken, the

matter had a very suspicious aspect, although there was no direct proof against the doctor. It was proved that he had attempted to bleed the patient, but had not succeeded, and that at that time the old laird was black in the face.

When it began to wear nigh night, and nothing further could be learned, the sheriff-clerk, a quiet considerate gentleman, asked why they had not examined the wright who had made the coffin, and also placed the body in it. The thing had not been thought of; but he was found in court, and instantly put into the witness-box, and examined on oath. His name was James Sander-son, a little, stout-made, shrewd-looking man, with a very peculiar squint. He was examined thus by the procurator-fiscal:—

“Were you long acquainted with the late Laird of Wineholm, James?”

“Yes, ever since I left my apprenticeship; for, I suppose, about nineteen years.”

“Was he very much given to drinking of late?”

“I could not say; he took his glass geyan heartily.”

“Did you ever drink with him.”

“O yes, mony a time.”

“You must have seen him very drunk, then? Did you ever see him so drunk, for instance, that he could not rise?”

“Never; for long afore that, I could not have kenned whether he was sitting or standing.”

“Were you present at the corpse-chesting?”

“Yes, I was.”

“And were you certain the body was then deposited in the coffin?”

“Yes; quite certain.”

“Did you screw down the coffin lid firmly then, as you do others of the same make?”

“No, I did not.”

“What were your reasons for that?”

“They were no reasons of mine; I

did what I was ordered. There were private reasons, which I then wist not of. But, gentlemen, there are some things connected with this affair, which I am bound in honour not to reveal. I hope you will not compel me to divulge them at present."

"You are bound by a solemn oath, James, the highest of all obligations; and, for the sake of justice, you must tell everything you know; and it would be better if you would just tell your tale straightforward, without the interruption of question and answer."

"Well, then, since it must be so:—That day, at the chesting, the doctor took me aside and said to me, 'James Sanderson, it will be necessary that something be put into the coffin to prevent any unpleasant odour before the funeral; for owing to the corpulence, and the inflamed state of the body by apoplexy, there will be great danger of this.'

"'Very well, sir,' says I; 'what shall I bring?'

"'You had better only screw down the lid lightly at present, then,' said he; 'and if you could bring a bucketful of quicklime a little while hence, and pour it over the body, especially over the face, it is a very good thing, an excellent thing, for preventing any deleterious effluvia from escaping.'

"'Very well, sir,' said I; and so I followed his directions. I procured the lime; and as I was to come privately in the evening to deposit it in the coffin, in company with the doctor alone, I was putting off the time in my workshop, polishing some trifle, and thinking to myself that I could not find in my heart to choke up my old friend with quicklime, even after he was dead, when, to my unspeakable horror, who should enter my workshop but the identical laird himself, dressed in his dead-clothes in the very same manner in which I had seen him laid in the coffin, but apparently all streaming in blood to the feet.

I fell back over against a cart-wheel, and was going to call out, but could not; and as he stood straight in the door, there was no means of escape. At length the apparition spoke to me in a hoarse trembling voice, and it said to me, 'Jamie Sanderson! O, Jamie Sanderson! I have been forced to appear to you in a d—d frightful guise!' These were the very first words it spoke, and they were far from being a lie; but I halfflins thought to mysel that a being in such circumstances might have spoken with a little more caution and decency. I could make no answer, for my tongue refused all attempts at articulation, and my lips would not come together; and all that I could do was to lie back against my new cart-wheel, and hold up my hands as a kind of defence. The ghastly and blood-stained apparition, advancing a step or two, held up both its hands, flying with dead ruffles, and cried to me in a still more frightful voice, 'Oh, my faithful old friend, I have been murdered! I am a murdered man, Jamie Sanderson! And if you do not assist me in bringing upon the wretch due retribution, dire will be your punishment in the other world.'

"This is sheer raving, James," said the sheriff, interrupting him. "These words can be nothing but the ravings of a disturbed and heated imagination. I entreat you to recollect that you have appealed to the Great Judge of heaven and earth for the truth of what you assert here, and to answer accordingly."

"I know what I am saying, my Lord Sheriff," said Sanderson; "and I am telling naething but the plain truth, as nearly as my state of mind at the time permits me to recollect. The appalling figure approached still nearer and nearer to me, breathing threatenings if I would not rise and fly to his assistance, and swearing like a sergeant of dragoons at both the doctor and myself. At length it came so close to me that I had no other shift but to hold up both feet and

hands to shield me, as I had seen herons do when knocked down by a goshawk, and I cried out; but even my voice failed, so that I only cried like one through his sleep."

"What the d—l are you lying gaping and braying at there?" said he, seizing me by the wrist and dragging me after him. "Do you not see the plight I am in, and why won't you fly to succour me?"

"I now felt, to my great relief, that this terrific apparition was a being of flesh, blood, and bones like myself;—that, in short, it was indeed my kind old friend the laird popped out of his open coffin, and come over to pay me an evening visit, but certainly in such a guise as earthly visit was never paid. I soon gathered up my scattered senses, took my old friend into my room, bathed him all over, and washed him well with lukewarm water; then put him into a warm bed, gave him a glass or two of hot punch, and he came round amazingly. He caused me to survey his neck a hundred times, I am sure; and I had no doubt he had been strangled, for there was a purple ring round it, which in some places was black, and a little swollen; his voice creaked like a door-hinge, and his features were still distorted. He swore terribly at both the doctor and myself; but nothing put him half so mad as the idea of the quicklime being poured over him, and particularly over his face. I am mistaken if that experiment does not serve him for a theme of execration as long as he lives."

"So he is alive, then, you say?" asked the fiscal.

"O yes, sir, alive, and tolerably well, considering. We two have had several bottles together in my quiet room; for I have still kept him concealed, to see what the doctor would do next. He is in terror for him, somehow, until sixty days be over from some date that he

talks of, and seems assured that the dog will have his life by hook or crook, unless he can bring him to the gallows betimes, and he is absent on that business to-day. One night lately, when fully half seas over, he set off to the schoolhouse, and frightened the dominie; and last night he went up to the stable, and gave old Broadcast a hearing for not keeping his mare well enough.

"It appears that some shaking motion in the coffining of the laird had brought him back to himself, after bleeding abundantly both at mouth and nose; that he was on his feet ere he knew how he had been disposed of, and was quite shocked at seeing the open coffin on the bed, and himself dressed in his grave-clothes, and all in one bath of blood. He flew to the door, but it was locked outside; he rapped furiously for something to drink, but the room was far removed from any inhabited part of the house, and none regarded; so he had nothing for it but to open the window, and come through the garden and the back lane leading to my workshop. And as I had got orders to bring a bucketful of quicklime, I went over in the forenight with a bucketful of heavy gravel, as much as I could carry, and a little white lime sprinkled on the top of it; and being let in by the doctor, I deposited it in the coffin, screwed down the lid, and left it. The funeral followed in due course, the whole of which the laird viewed from my window, and gave the doctor a hearty day's cursing for daring to support his head and lay it in the grave. And this, gentlemen, is the substance of what I know concerning this enormous deed, which is, I think, quite sufficient. The laird bound me to secrecy until such time as he could bring matters to a proper bearing for securing the doctor; but as you have forced it from me, you must stand my surety, and answer the charges against me."

The laird arrived that night with

proper authority, and a number of officers, to have the doctor, his son-in-law, taken into custody; but the bird had flown; and from that day forth he was never seen, so as to be recognised, in Scotland. The laird lived many years after that; and though the thoughts of the quicklime made him drink a great deal, yet from that time he never suffered himself to get *quite* drunk, lest some one might take it into his head to hang him, and he not know

anything about it. The dominie acknowledged that it was as impracticable to calculate what might happen in human affairs as to square the circle, which could only be effected by knowing the ratio of the circumference to the radius. For shoeing horses, vending news, and awarding proper punishments, the smith to this day just beats the world. And old John Broadcast is as thankfu' to heaven as ever that things are as they are.

AN INCIDENT IN THE GREAT MORAY FLOODS OF 1829.

BY SIR THOMAS DICK LAUDER.

THE flood, both in the Spey and its tributary burn, was terrible at the village of Charlestown of Aberlour. On the 3d of August, Charles Cruickshanks, the innkeeper, had a party of friends in his house. There was no ineptitude, but there was a fiddle; and what Scotsman is he who does not know that the well-jerked strains of a lively strathspey have a potent spell in them that goes beyond even the witchery of the bowl? On one who daily inhales the breezes from the musical stream that gives name to the measure, the influence is powerful, and it was that day felt by Cruickshanks with a more than ordinary degree of excitement. He was joyous to a pitch that made his wife grave. Mrs Cruickshanks was deeply affected by her husband's jollity. "Surely my goodman is daft the day," said she gravely; "I ne'er saw him dance at sic a rate. Lord grant that he binna fey!"*

* "I think," said the old gardener to one of the maids, 'the gauger's *fie*,—by which word the common people express those violent spirits, which they think a presage of death."—*Guy Mannering*.

When the river began to rise rapidly in the evening, Cruickshanks, who had a quantity of wood lying near the mouth of the burn, asked two of his neighbours to go and assist him in dragging it out of the water. They readily complied, and Cruickshanks getting on the loose raft of wood, they followed him, and did what they could in pushing and hauling the pieces of timber ashore, till the stream increased so much, that, with one voice, they declared they would stay no longer, and, making a desperate effort, they plunged over-head, and reached the land with the greatest difficulty. They then tried all their eloquence to persuade Cruickshanks to come away, but he was a bold and experienced floater, and laughed at their fears; nay, so utterly reckless was he, that having now diminished the crazy ill-put-together raft he stood on, till it consisted of a few spars only, he employed himself in trying to catch at and save some haycocks belonging to the clergyman, which were floating past him. But while his attention was so engaged, the flood was rapidly increasing, till, at last, even his dauntless heart

became appalled at its magnitude and fury. "A horse ! a horse !" he loudly and anxiously exclaimed ; " run for one of the minister's horses, and ride in with a rope, else I must go with the stream." He was quickly obeyed, but ere a horse arrived, the flood had rendered it impossible to approach him.

Seeing that he must abandon all hope of help in that way, Cruickshanks was now seen as if summoning up all his resolution and presence of mind to make the perilous attempt of dashing through the raging current, with his frail and imperfect raft. Grasping more firmly the iron-shod pole he held in his hand—called in floater's language a *sting*—he pushed resolutely into it ; but he had hardly done so when the violence of the water wrenched from his hold that which was all he had to depend on. A shriek burst from his friends, as they beheld the wretched raft dart off with him down the stream, like an arrow freed from the bowstring. But the mind of Cruickshanks was no common one to quail before the first approach of danger. He poised himself, and stood balanced, with determination and self-command in his eye, and no sound of fear, or of complaint, was heard to come from him.

At the point where the burn met the river, in the ordinary state of both, there grew some trees, now surrounded by deep and strong currents, and far from the land. The raft took a direction towards one of these, and seeing the wide and tumultuous waters of the Spey before him, in which there was no hope that his loosely-connected logs could stick one moment together, he coolly prepared himself, and, collecting all his force into one well-timed and well-directed effort, he sprang, caught a tree, and clung among its boughs, whilst the frail raft, hurried away from under his foot, was dashed into fragments, and scattered on the bosom of

the waves. A shout of joy arose from his anxious friends, for they now deemed him safe ; but he uttered no shout in return. Every nerve was strained to procure help. "A boat !" was the general cry, and some ran this way, and some that, to endeavour to procure one. It was now between seven and eight o'clock in the evening. A boat was speedily obtained, and though no one was very expert in its use, it was quickly manned by people eager to save Cruickshanks from his perilous situation. The current was too terrible about the tree to admit of their nearing it, so as to take him directly into the boat ; but their object was to row through the smoother water, to such a distance as might enable them to throw a rope to him, by which means they hoped to drag him to the boat. Frequently did they attempt this, and as frequently were they foiled, even by that which was considered as the gentler part of the stream, for it hurried them past the point whence they wished to make the cast of their rope, and compelled them to row up again by the side, to start on each fresh adventure.

Often were they carried so much in the direction of the tree as to be compelled to exert all their strength to pull themselves away from him they would have saved, that they might avoid the vortex that would have caught and swept them to destruction. And often was poor Cruickshanks tantalized with the approach of help, which came but to add to the other miseries of his situation that of the bitterest disappointment. Yet he bore all calmly. In the transient glimpses they had of him, as they were driven past him, they saw no blanching on his dauntless countenance—they heard no reproach, no complaint, no sound, but an occasional short exclamation of encouragement to persevere in their friendly endeavours. But the evening wore on, and still they were unsuccessful. It seemed to them that

something more than mere natural causes was operating against them. "His hour is come!" said they, as they regarded one another with looks of awe; "our struggles are vain." The courage and the hope which had hitherto supported them began to fail, and the descending shades of night extinguished the last feeble sparks of both, and put an end to their endeavours.

Fancy alone can picture the horrors that must have crept on the unfortunate man, as, amidst the impenetrable darkness which now prevailed, he became aware of the continued increase of the flood that roared around him, by its gradual advance towards his feet, whilst the rain and the tempest continued to beat more and more dreadfully upon him. That these were long ineffectual in shaking his collected mind, we know from the fact, afterwards ascertained, that he actually wound up his watch while in this dreadful situation. But, hearing no more the occasional passing exclamations of those who had been hitherto trying to succour him, he began to shout for help in a voice that became every moment more long-drawn and piteous, as, between the gusts of the tempest, and borne over the thunder of the waters, it fell from time to time on the ears of his clustered friends, and rent the heart of his distracted wife. Ever and anon it came, and hoarser than before, and there was an occasional wildness in its note, and now and then a strange and clamorous repetition for a time, as if despair had inspired him with an unnatural energy; but the shouts became gradually shorter,—less audible and less frequent,—till at last their eagerly listening ears could catch them no longer. "Is he gone?" was the half-whispered question they put to one another; and the smothered responses that were muttered around but too plainly told how much the fears of all were in unison.

"What was that?" cried his wife in a

delirious scream; "that was his whistle I heard!" She said truly. A shrill whistle, such as that which is given with the fingers in the mouth, rose again over the loud din of the deluge and the yelling of the storm. He was not yet gone. His voice was but cracked by his frequent exertions to make it heard, and he had now resorted to an easier mode of transmitting to his friends the certainty of his safety. For some time his unhappy wife drew hope from such considerations, but his whistles, as they came more loud and prolonged, pierced the ears of his foreboding friends like the ill-omened cry of some warning spirit; and it may be matter of question whether all believed that the sounds they heard were really mortal. Still they came louder and clearer for a brief space; but at last they were heard no more, save in his frantic wife's fancy, who continued to start, as if she still heard them, and to wander about, and to listen, when all but herself were satisfied that she could never hear them again.

Wet and weary, and shivering with cold, was this miserable woman, when the tardy dawn of morning beheld her straining her eye-balls through the imperfect light, towards the trees where Cruickshanks had been last seen. There was something there that looked like the figure of a man, and on that her eyes fixed. But those around her saw, alas! too well, that what she fondly supposed to be her husband was but a bunch of wreck gathered by the flood into one of the trees,—for the one to which he clung had been swept away.

The body of poor Cruickshanks was found in the afternoon of next day, on the Haugh of Dandaleith, some four or five miles below. As it had ever been his uniform practice to wind up his watch at night, and as it was discovered to be nearly full wound when it was taken from his pocket, the fact of his having had self-possession enough to

obey his usual custom, under circumstances so terrible, is as unquestionable as it is wonderful. It had stopped at a quarter of an hour past eleven o'clock, which would seem to fix that as the fatal moment when the tree was rent away; for when that happened, his struggles amidst the raging waves of the Spey must have been few and short.

When the men, who had so unsuccessfully attempted to save him, were talking over the matter, and arguing that no human help could have availed him,—

“I’m thinkin’ I could hae ta’en him out,” said a voice in the circle.

All eyes were turned towards the speaker, and a general expression of contempt followed; for it was a boy of

the name of Rainey, a reputed idiot, from the foot of Benrinnes, who spoke.

“ You ! ” cried a dozen voices at once; “ what would you have done, you wise man ? ”

“ I wud hae tied an empty anker-cask to the end o’ a lang, lang tow, an’ I wud hae floated it aff frae near aboot whaur the raft was ta’en first awa ; an’ syne, ye see, as the stream teuk the raft till the tree, maybe she wud hae ta’en the cask there too ; an’ if Charlie Cruickshanks had ance gotten a haud o’ this rope — ”

He would have finished, but his auditors were gone: they had silently slunk away in different directions, one man alone having muttered, as he went, something about “ wisdom coming out of the mouth of fools.”

CHARLIE GRAHAM, THE TINKER.

BY GEORGE PENNY.

THE notorious Charlie Graham belonged to a gang of tinkers, who had for a long time travelled through the country, and whose headquarters were at Lochgelly, in Fife. They were to be found at all markets, selling their horn spoons, which was their ostensible occupation. But there was a great deal of business done in the pickpocket line, and other branches of the thieving art. About Charlie there were some remarkable traits of generosity. In the midst of all the crimes he committed, he was never known to hurt a poor man, but often out of his plunder helped those in a strait. His father was in the same line, and was long at the head of the gang; but being afterwards imprisoned for theft, housebreaking, &c., he was banished the county, banished Scotland, and publicly whipped. On one occasion

he was banished, with certification that if he returned, he was to be publicly whipped the first market-day, and thereafter to be banished. Old Charlie was not long away when he returned, and was apprehended and conveyed to Perth jail. A vacancy having occurred in the office of executioner, the first market-day was allowed to pass without inflicting the sentence, upon which Charlie entered a protest, and was liberated. In various ways he eluded justice,—sometimes by breaking the prison, and sometimes for want of evidence. The last time he was brought in, he was met by an old acquaintance, who asked, “ What is the matter now? ” to which old Charlie replied, “ Oh, just the auld thing, and nae proof; ” which saying has since become a proverb. But this time they did find proof, and he was

again publicly whipped, and sent out of the country. One of his daughters, Meg Graham, who had been bred from her infancy in the same way, was every now and then apprehended for some petty theft. Indeed, she was so often in jail, that she got twenty-eight dinners from old John Rutherford, the writer, who gave the prisoners in the jail a dinner every Christmas. Meg, in her young days, was reckoned one of the first beauties of the time ; but she was a wild one. She had been whipped and pilloried, but still the root of the matter remained.

Young Charlie was a man of uncommon strength and size, being about six feet high, and stout in proportion. His wrist was as thick as that of two ordinary men ; he had long been the terror of the country, and attended all markets at the head of his gang, where they were sure to kick up a row among themselves. Two of their women would commence a battle-royal in the midst of the throng, scratch and tear one another's caps, until a mob was assembled, when the rest were very busy in picking pockets. In this way they were frequently very successful.

At a market to the west of Crieff a farmer got his pocket-book taken from him. It being ascertained that Charlie Graham and his gang were in the market,—who were well known to several of the respectable farmers, who frequently lodged them on their way to the country,—it was proposed to get Charlie and give him a glass, and tell him the story. Charlie accepted the invitation ; and during the circulation of the glass, one of the company introduced the subject, lamenting the poor man's loss in such a feeling way, that the right chord was struck, and Charlie's generosity roused. An appeal was made to him to lend the poor man such a sum, as his credit was at stake. Charlie said they had done nothing that day, but if anything cast up, he would

see what could be done. During this conversation another company came into the room ; amongst whom was a man with a greatcoat, a Highland bonnet, and a large drover whip. After being seated, this personage was recognised as belonging to the gang, and they were invited to drink with them, whilst the story of the robbery was repeated. On this Charlie asked his friend if he could lend him forty pounds to give to the poor man, and he would repay him in a few days. The man replied that he had forty pounds which he was going to pay away ; but if it was to favour a friend, he would put off his business and help him ; when, to their astonishment, the identical notes which the man had lost were tossed to him ; and Charlie said that that would relieve him in the meantime, and he could repay him when convenient. It was evident that Charlie smelt a rat, and took this method to get off honourably. Of course, the forty pounds were never sought after.

Charlie was one day lodged with a poor widow, who had a few acres of ground, and kept a public-house. She complained to him that she was unable to raise her rent, that the factor was coming that night for payment, and that she was considerably deficient. Charlie gave her what made it up, and in the evening went out of the way, after learning at what time the factor would be there. The factor came, received payment, and returned home ; but on the way he was met by Charlie, who eased him of his cash, and returned the rent to the poor widow.

The Rev. Mr Graham of Fossoway came one day to Perth to discount some bills in the Bank of Scotland. Having got his bills cashed, his spirits rose to blood-heat, and a hearty glass was given to his friends, until the parson got a little muddy. His friends, loth to leave him in that state, hired a horse each to convey him home. It was dark and late when they set out, and by the

time they reached Damhead, where they put up their horses, it was morning. The house was re-building at the time, and the family living in the barn when the parson and his friends were introduced. Here they found Charlie and some of his friends over a bowl, of which the minister was cordially invited to partake. His companions also joined, and kept it up with great glee for some time—the minister singing his song, and Charlie getting very big. One of the friends, knowing how the land lay, was very anxious to be off, for fear of the minister's money, and ordered out the horses ; but to this Charlie would by no means consent. This alarmed the friends still more ; as for the minister, he was now beyond all fear. However, in a short time a number of men came in and called for drink, and then Charlie, after the glass had gone round, said he thought it was time for the minister to get home, and went out to see them on their horses ; when he told them he had detained them till the return of these men, who, if they had met them, might have proved dangerous neighbours ; but now they could go home in safety.

He was one day on his way to Auchterarder market, when he met a farmer going from home, in whose barn he had frequently lodged, when Charlie told him he was to lodge with him that night. The farmer said he could not take strangers into his barn in its present state, as his summer's cheese, and many other things, were lodged there. "D—n your cheese," replied Charlie ; "do you think, old boy, that I would lay down my honesty for your trash o' cheese ?" They parted, and Charlie got permission from the gudewife for himself, as there were no others with him. The farmer came home late, and knew not that Charlie was there. In the morning when he went into the barn, he was astonished to find it all in an uproar. Upwards of twenty individuals

— men, women, and children — were lying among the straw. The wife was called upon to see what state the barn was in ; and the old man, in no very soft voice, railed at her for admitting such a band. She replied that she would send them away quietly : and this she did by giving them as much brose and milk as they could take. On their departure, Charlie told him he was a mean old crab, and that his wife was worth a hundred of him. However, he kept his word as to the cheese, and nothing was touched.

In the market next day, a good deal of business was done in his way ; several pockets were picked, and a number of petty thefts committed. Charlie being in the habit of dealing with respectable merchants for horn spoons, he was one day in the shop getting payment for a parcel. The money was counted down, but during the time his wife was taking it up, the merchant turned to speak to some one in the shop ; the wife, on taking up the money, said she wanted five shillings ; the merchant said he was positive he laid down the whole. She still insisted that she wanted five shillings, and the merchant was determined to resist ; on which Charlie interfered, saying, "Come, come, ye limmer, down with the money ; none of your tricks here."

At one time he took it into his head to enlist for a regiment in India, with a party in Perth ; he did very well until they were ordered to join the regiment. All the recruits being assembled but Charlie, he at last was found drinking in a public-house, but would not stir a foot. The officer was got, and the party attempted, after fair means had failed, to take him by force. They only got him the length of the street, when he drew a short bludgeon from an inside pocket, and laid about him from right to left, in such a way that the whole were soon sprawling on the street, and he escaped. The officer,

seeing what kind of a character he was, desired the sergeant not to look after him, as he would have nothing to do with him.

At all the fairs he was present with his gang. If any row commenced he was sure to take a lead,—and whichever party he joined were generally left masters of the field. One midsummer market at Perth, a dreadful row got up between the weavers and the farmer lads, hundreds of whom attended the market at that time. Charlie and his friends joined the weavers ; the streets were soon in a perfect uproar ; the Chapman's stands were upset, and themselves tumbled in the midst of their goods ; sweeties and gingerbread were scattered in all directions by the pressure of the contending parties ; and broken heads and faces were to be seen in abundance. The whole fair was thrown into a dreadful state of confusion, until a party of military were brought out, who at length succeeded in restoring order; but Charlie and his friends were not to be found. Many individuals lost their hats, &c., and got bruised bones and torn coats ; it was also discovered that many pockets had been picked during the affray.

Charlie had often been convicted of theft, imprisoned, and banished the county. He not unfrequently made his escape by breaking out of prison ; but was at length apprehended for horse stealing ; and during his confinement was put in irons, in one of the strong cages in the old jail. During his imprisonment he was very cheerful, often declaring they could have no proof

against him ; but a short time convinced him of his folly. He was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to be hanged. When brought out to execution, he was attended by four artillerymen, for fear of resistance. He recognised many of his old acquaintances in the multitude—particularly the merchant with whom he dealt in spoons, and gave him a bow and a wave of his hand. When the fatal hour approached he appeared quite subdued, and submitted to his fate with calm resignation. After his body was cut down it was conveyed to the grave by an immense multitude ; the coffin was opened and filled with quicklime, to render it useless for the surgeon.

Charlie's death was a severe loss to the gang ; immediately after this Charlie Brown, his brother-in-law, became leader. This fellow, although not so large a man, was stout, firmly built, of great activity, and, like Graham, had been frequently in the hands of the law, and made shift to get clear, until at last the fiscal was determined to have him. It being ascertained that he was in the neighbourhood, a party of light dragoons was sent out with the officers, who traced him to Auchtergaven. When he saw the party, he set off through the fields, until fairly run down by two of the horsemen, and brought to Perth. This desperate character had on him about eighty guineas ; he was charged with several crimes, convicted, and sent to Botany Bay for life. After this the gang, who had for a long period infested the country, dispersed, and was seldom heard of.—*Traditions of Perth.*

THE SNOWING-UP OF STRATH LUGAS;

OR, THE MATCH-MAKING LAIRD.

JOLLY old Simon Kirkton ! thou art the very high-priest of Hymen. There is something softly persuasive to matrimony in thy contented, comfortable appearance ; and thy house,—why, though it is situated in the farthest part of Inverness-shire, it is as fertile in connubial joys as if it were placed upon Gretna Green. Single blessedness is a term unknown in thy vocabulary ; heaven itself would be a miserable place for thee, for *there* is neither marrying nor giving in marriage !

Half the county was invited to a grand dinner and ball at Simon's house in January 1812. All the young ladies had looked forward to it in joyous anticipation and hope, and all the young gentlemen, with considerable expectation—and fear. Everything was to be on the greatest scale : the dinner in the ancient hall, with the two family pipers discoursing sweet music between the courses, and the ball in the splendid new drawing-room, with a capital band from the county town. The Duke was to be there with all the nobility, rank, and fashion of the district ; and, in short, such a splendid entertainment had never been given at Strath Lugus in the memory of man. The editor of the county paper had a description of it in type a month before, and the milliners far and near never said their prayers without a supplication for the health of Mr Kirkton. All this time that worthy gentleman was not idle. The drawing-room was dismantled of its furniture, and the floors industriously chalked over with innumerable groups of flowers. The larder was stocked as if for a siege ; the domestics drilled into a knowledge of their duties ; and every preparation completed in the most

irreproachable style. I question whether Gunter ever dreamt of such a supper as was laid out in the dining-room : venison in all its forms, and fish of every kind. It would have victualled a seventy-four to China.

The day came at last,—a fine, sharp, clear day, as ever gave a bluish tinge to the countenance, or brought tears to “beauty's eye.” There had been a great fall of snow a few days before, but the weather seemed now settled into a firm, enduring frost. The laird had not received a single apology, and waited in the hall along with his lady to receive the guests as they arrived.

“ My dear, isna that a carriage coming up the Brose-fit-knowe ? Auld Leddy Clavers, I declare. She'll be going to dress here, and the three girls. Anne's turned religious ; so I'm thinking she's ower auld to be married. It's a pity the minister's no coming : his wife's just dead ; but Jeanie'll be looking out for somebody. We maun put her next to young Gerfluin. Elizabeth's a thocht ower young ; she can stay at the side-table with Tammy Maxwell—he's just a hobbletehoy—it wad be a very good match in time.”

In this way, as each party made its appearance, the laird arranged in a moment the order in which every individual was to be placed at table ; and even before dinner, he had the satisfaction of seeing his guests breaking off into the quiet *tête-à-têtes*, which the noise and occupation of a general company render sweet and secluded as a meeting “ by moonlight alone.” While his eye wandered round the various parties thus pleasantly engaged, it rested on the figure of a very beautiful girl whom he had not previously re-

marked. She sat apart from all the rest, and was amusing herself with looking at the pictures suspended round the room, apparently unconscious of the presence of so many strangers. She seemed in deep thought; but as she gazed on the representation of a battle-piece, her face changed its expression from the calmness of apathy to the most vivid enthusiasm.

"Mercy on us a'!" whispered the laird to his wife, "wha's she that? that beautiful young lassie in the white goon? An' no' a young bachelor within a mile o' her. Deil ane o' them deserves such an angel!"

"It's a Miss Mowbray," was the reply; "she came with Mrs Carmichael, —a great heiress they say: it's the first time she was ever in Scotland."

"Aha! say ye sae? Then we'll see if we canna keep her among us noo that she is come. Angus M'Leod—na, he'll no do—he's a gude enough lad, but he's no bonnie. Chairlie Fletcher—he wad do weel enough; but I'm thinking he'll do better for Bell Johnson. 'Od, donnered auld man, no to think o' him before! Chairlie Melville's the very man—the handsomest, bravest, cleverest chield she could hae; and if she's gotten the siller, so much the better for Chairlie—they'll mak a bonnie couple."

And in an instant the laird laid his hand on the shoulder of a young man, who was engaged with a knot of gentlemen discussing some recent news from the Peninsula, and dragging him away, said,—

"For shame, Chairlie, for shame! Do you no see that sweet, modest lassie a' by hersel? Gang up to her this minute—bide by her as lang as ye can—she's weel worth a' the attention ye can pay her. Miss Mowbray," he continued, "I'm sorry my friend, Mrs Carmichael, has left ye sae much to yoursel; but here's Chairlie, or rather I should say, Mr Charles, or rather I should say, Lieutenant Charles Melville, that will

be happy to supply her place. He'll tak ye in to yer dinner, and dance wi' ye at the ball."

"All in place of Mrs Carmichael, sir?" replied the young lady, with an arch look.

"Weel said, my dear, weel said; but I maun leave younger folks to answer ye. I've seen the time I wadna hae been very blate to gie ye an answer that wad hae stoppit your 'wee bit mou, sae sweet and bonnie.'" Saying these words, and whispering to his young friend, "Stick till her, Chairlie," he bustled off, "on hospitable thoughts intent," to another part of the room.

After the introduction, the young people soon entered into conversation; and, greatly to the laird's satisfaction, the young soldier conducted Miss Mowbray into the hall, sat next her all the time of dinner, and seemed as delighted with his companion as the most match-making lady or gentleman could desire. The lady, on the other hand, seemed in high spirits, and laughed at the remarks of her neighbour with the greatest appearance of enjoyment.

"How long have you been with Mrs Carmichael?"

"I came the day before yesterday."

"Rather a savage sort of country, I am afraid, you find this, after the polished scenes of your own land?"

"Do you mean the country," replied the lady, "or the inhabitants? They are not nearly such savages as I expected; some of them seem half-civilised."

"It is only your good-nature that makes you think us so. When you know us better, you will alter your opinion."

"Nay; now don't be angry, or talk as all other Scotch people do, about your national virtues. I know you are a very wonderful people—your men all heroes, your peasants philosophers, and your women angels; but seriously, I was very much disappointed to find you so like other people."

"Why, what did you expect? Did you think we were 'men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders?'"

"No, I did not expect that; but I expected to find everything different from what I had been accustomed to. Now, the company here are dressed just like a party in England, and behave in the same manner. Even the language is intelligible at times; though the laird, I must say, would require an interpreter."

"Ah, the jolly old laird! His face is a sort of polyglot dictionary—it is the expression for good-humour, kindness, and hospitality, in all languages."

"And who is that at his right hand?"

"What? the henchman? That's Rory M'Taggart—he was piper for twenty years in the 73d, and killed three men with his own hand at Vimiera."

"And is that the reason he is called the henchman?"

"Yes; henchman means, 'the piper with the bloody hand—the slaughterer of three.'"

"What a comprehensive word! It is almost equal to the laird's face."

But here the laird broke in upon their conversation.

"Miss Mowbray, dinna be frightened at a' the daft things the wild sodger is saying to you." Then he added, in a lower tone, "Chairlie wad settle down into a douce, quiet, steady, married man, for a' his tantrums. It wad be a pity if a Frenchman's gun should spoil his beauty, puir fallow!"

The young lady bowed without comprehending a syllable of the speech of the worthy host.

"Are you likely to be soon ordered abroad?" she said.

"We expect the route for Spain every day; and then huzza for a peerage or Westminster Abbey!"

"Ah! war is a fine game when it is played at a distance. Why can't kings

settle their disputes without having recourse to the sword?"

"I really can't answer your question, but I think it must be out of a kind regard for the interest of younger brothers. A war is a capital provision for poor fellows like myself, who were born to no estate but that excessively large one which the Catechism calls the 'estate of sin and misery.' But come, I see from your face you are very romantic, and are going to say something sentimental—luckily his Grace is proposing a removal into the ball-room; may I beg the honour of your hand?"

"Aha, lad!" cried the laird, who had heard the last sentence; "are ye at that wark already—asking a leddy's hand on sic short an acquaintance? But folk canna do't ower sune."

The bustle caused by the secession of those who preferred Terpsichore to Bacchus, luckily prevented Miss Mowbray's hearing the laird's observation, and in a few minutes she found herself entering with heart and soul into the full enjoyment of a country dance.

Marriages, they say, are made in heaven. Charles Melville devoutly wished the laird's efforts might be successful, and that one could be made on earth. She was indeed, as the laird expressed it, "a bonnie cratur to look at." I never could describe a beauty in my life—so the loveliness of the English heiress must be left to the imagination. At all events, she was "the bright consummate flower of the whole wreath" which was then gathered together at Strath Lugas; and even Lady Clavers said that—

"Miss Mowbray's very weel put on indeed, for sae young a lassie. Her hair's something like our Anne's—only I think Anne's has a wee richer tinge o' the golden."

"Preserve us a'!" whispered the laird; "puir Anne's hair is as red as a carrot."

"An' dinna ye think her voice,"

said her ladyship—"dinna ye think her voice is something like our Jeanie's—only maybe no sae rich in the tone?"

"Feth, ma'am," answered the laird, "I maun wait till I hear Miss Mowbray speak the Gaelic, for really the saft sort o' beautiful English she speaks gies her a great advantage."

"As ye say, Mr Kirkton," continued her ladyship, who, like all great talkers, never attended to what any one said but herself, "Jeanie has a great advantage ower her; but she's weel enough, for a' that."

In the meantime the young lady, who was the subject of this conversation, troubled herself very little as to what Lady Clavers said or thought on that occasion. I shall not on any account say that she was in love, for I highly disapprove of such a speedy surrender to Dan Cupid in the softer sex; but at all events she was highly delighted with the novelty of the scene, and evidently pleased with her partner. No scruple of the same kind restrains me from mentioning the state of Charlie Melville's heart. He was as deeply in love as ever was the hero of a romance, and in the pauses of the dance indulged in various reveries about love and a cottage, and a number of other absurd notions, which are quite common, I believe, on such occasions. He never deigned to think on so contemptible an object as a butcher's bill, or how inconvenient it would be to maintain a wife and four or five angels of either sex on ninety pounds a year; but at the same time, I must do him the justice to state, that, although he was a Scotsman, the fact of Miss Mowbray's being an heiress never entered into his contemplation; and if I may mention my own opinion, I really believe he would have been better pleased if she had been as portionless as himself.

But time and tide wear through the roughest day; no wonder, then, they wore very rapidly through the happiest

evening he had ever spent. The Duke and the more distant visitors had taken their leave; "the mirth and fun grew fast and furious" among the younger and better acquainted parties who were left; but, greatly to the mortification of the young soldier, his partner was called away at the end of a dance, just when he had been anticipating a delightful *tête-à-tête* while the next was forming. With his heart nearly bursting with admiration and regret, he wrapt her in her cloaks and shawls, and in silent dejection, with only a warm pressure of the hand, which he was enchanted to find returned, he handed her into Mrs Carmichael's old-fashioned open car, though the night was dark and stormy,—and after listening to the last sound of the wheels as they were lost among the snow, he slowly turned, and re-entered the ball-room.

Their absence, to all appearance, had not been noticed by a single eye,—a thing at which he, as a lover under such circumstances is bound to be, was greatly surprised. "Blockheads!" he said, "they would not see the darkness if the sun were extinguished at midday." And he fell into a train of reflections, which, from the expression of his countenance, did not seem to be of a very exhilarating nature. In about twenty minutes, however, after his return, he was roused by the henchman, whom he had spoken of at dinner, who beckoned him from the hall.

"The bonny cratur!—the bonny cratur!" he began,—"an' sic a nicht to gang hame in!—the stars a' put out, the snaw beginning to drift, and a spate in the Lugas! Noo, if auld Andrew Strachan, the Leddy Carmichael's coachman,—doited auld body, an' mair than half fou',—tries the ford, oh, the lassie, the bonny lassie'll be lost! an' I'll never hae the heart to spend the crown-piece she slippit into my hand just afore the dancin'!"

But what more the worthy henchman might have said must remain a mystery to all succeeding time; for long before he had come to the episode of the crown, Charles had rushed hatless into the open air, and dashed forward at the top of his speed to overtake the carriage, in time to warn them from the ford. But the snow had already formed itself into enormous wreaths, which, besides impeding his progress, interfered greatly with his knowledge of the localities; and he pursued his toilsome way more in despair than hope. He shouted, in the expectation of his voice being heard, but he heard no reply. He stooped down to see the track of the wheels, but the snow fell so fast and drifted at the same time, that it was quite undistinguishable, even if the darkness had not been so deep. However, onwards he pressed towards the ford, and shouted louder and louder as he approached it.

The roaring of the stream, now swollen to a prodigious height, drowned his cries, and his eyes in vain searched for the object of his pursuit; far and near he directed his gaze, and felt a transport of joy at the hope, which their absence presented, that they had gone round by the bridge and were saved. He was about to return, when he thought he heard, in a bend in the river, a little way down, a faint scream above the roaring of the torrent. Quick as lightning he rushed towards the spot, and hallooed as loud as he could. The shriek was distinctly repeated, and a great way out in the water he saw some substance of considerable size. He shouted again, and a voice replied to him from the river. In an instant he had plunged into the stream, and though it was rushing with great impetuosity, it was luckily not so deep as to prevent his wading. And after considerable toil, for the water was above his breast, he succeeded in reaching the object he had despaired from the bank. It was, indeed, Mrs Carmichael's car, and in it

he had the inexpressible delight to find the two ladies, terrified, indeed, but happily in full possession of their presence of mind.

In a few hurried words, he desired them to trust entirely to him, and begging the elder lady to remain quiet in the carriage, he lifted the younger in his arms,—but in the most earnest language she implored him to save her companion first, as she had such confidence in herself that she was certain she could remain in the carriage till he had effected his return. Pressing her to his heart in admiration of such magnanimity, he laid her gently back, and lifting Mrs Carmichael from her seat, he pushed desperately for the shore. The water even in this short time had perceptibly risen, and on reaching the bank, and depositing his burden in safety, he rushed once more through the torrent, fearful lest a moment's delay should make it impracticable to reach the car. That light equipage was now shaking from the impetuous attacks of the stream, and at the moment when the fainting girl was lifted up, a rush of greater force taking it, now unbalanced by any weight, forced it on its side, and rolled it off into the great body of the river. It had been carried more than fifty yards below the ford, without, however, being overturned, and had luckily become entangled with the trunk of a tree; the horse, after severe struggles, had been drowned, and his inanimate weight had helped to delay the progress of the carriage. The coachman was nowhere to be found. Meanwhile the three, once more upon the land, pursued their path back to Strath Lugas. Long and toilsome was the road, but cheered to the young soldier by the happy consciousness that he had saved his "heart's idol" from death. Tired, and nearly worn out with the harassing nature of their journey and of their feelings, they at length reached the hospitable mansion they had so lately quitted.

The music was still sounding, the lights still burning brightly,—but when old Simon Kirkton saw the party enter his hall, no words can do justice to the horror of his expression. The ladies were consigned to the attention of his wife. He himself took especial care of the hero of the story ; and after having heard the whole adventure, when the soldier, refreshed, and in a suit of the laird's apparel, was entering the dancing room, he slapped him on the shoulder, and said—

" Deil a doubt o't noo. If ye're no laird o' the bonny English acres, and gudeman o' the bonny English leddy, I've nae skill in spaein', that's a'."

The adventure quickly spread, and people were sent off in all directions with lights, to discover, if possible, the body of the unfortunate Andrew Strachan. After searching for a long time, our friend the henchman thought he heard a voice close beside him, on the bank. He held down his lantern, and, sure enough, there he saw the object of their pursuit, lying at the very edge of the water, and his body on the land ! The water from time to time burst over his face, and it was only on these occasions that an almost inarticulate grunt showed that the comatose disciple of John Barleycorn was yet alive. The henchman summoned his companions, and on attentively listening to the groans, as they considered them, of the dying man, they distinctly heard him, as he attempted to spit out the water which broke in tiny waves over his mouth, exclaiming, " Faugh, faugh ! I doot ye're changing the liquor—a wee drap mair whisky, and a sma' spoonfu' o' sugar." The nodding charioteer had been ejected from his seat on the first impetus of the "spate," and been safely floated to land, without perceiving any remarkable change of situation. It is needless to say he was considerably surprised to discover where he was on being roused by the henchman's party.

" It's my belief," said Jock Stewart, the piper, " the drucken body thocht he was tipplin' a' the time in the butler's ha'! It wad be a gude deed to let the daidlin' haveril follow his hat and wig ; and I'm thinkin' by this time they'll be down about Fort-George."

The weather was become so stormy, and the snow so deep, that it was impossible for any one to leave the house that night. The hospitable laird immediately set about making accommodation for so large a party, and by a little management he contrived to render everybody comfortable. The fiddlers were lodged in the barn, the ladies settled by the half-dozen in a room, and a supply of cloaks was collected for the gentlemen in the hall. Where people are willing to be pleased, it is astonishing how easy they find it. Laughter long and loud resounded through all the apartments, and morn began to stand " upon the misty mountain-tops " ere sleep and silence took possession of the mansion. Next day the storm still continued. The prospect, as far as the eye could reach, was a dreary waste of snow ; and it was soon perceived, by those who were skilful in such matters, that the whole party were fairly snowed-up, and how long their imprisonment might last no one could tell. It was amazing with what equanimity the intelligence was listened to ; one or two young ladies, who had been particularly pleased with their partners, went as far as to say it was delightful.

The elders of the party bore it with great good-humour, on being assured from the state of the larder that there was no danger of a famine ; and, above all, the laird himself, who had some private schemes of his own to serve, was elevated into the seventh heaven by the embargo laid on his guests.

" If this bides three days there'll be a dizzen couple before Leddy-day. It's no possible for a lad and a lass to be snawed up thegither three days without

melting ;—but we 'll see the night how it's a' to be managed. Has onybody seen Mrs Carmichael and Miss Mowbray this morning ?"

But before this question could be answered the ladies entered the room. They were both pale from their last night's adventure ; but while the elder lady was shaking hands with her friends, and receiving their congratulations, the eyes of her young companion wandered searchingly round the apartment till they fell on Charles Melville. Immediately a flush came over her cheek, which before was deadly pale, and she started forward and held out her hand. He rushed and caught it, and even in presence of all that company could scarcely resist the inclination to put it to his lips.

"Thanks! thanks!" was all she said ; and even in saying these short words her voice trembled, and a tear came to her eye. But when she saw that all looks were fixed on her, she blushed more deeply than ever, and retired to the side of Mrs Carmichael. The scene passed by no means unheeded by the laird.

"Stupid whelp !" he said, "what for did he no kiss her, an it were just to gie her cheeks an excuse for growing sae rosy ? 'Od, if I had saved her frae drooning, I wadna hae been sae nice,—that's to say, my dear," he added to his wife, who was standing by, "if I hadna a wife o' my ain."

The storm lasted for five days. How the plans of the laird with regard to the matrimonial comforts of his guests prospered, I have no intention of detailing. I believe, however, he was right in his predictions, and the minister was presented with eight several sets of tea-things within three months. Many a spinster at this moment looks back with regret to her absence from the snow-party of Strath Lugas, and dates all her misfortunes from that unhappy circumstance. On the fourth morning of their imprisonment the laird was presented with a letter from Charles Melville. In

it he informed him that he dared not be absent longer, in case of his regiment being ordered abroad, and that he had taken his chance and set off on his homeward way in spite of the snow. It ended with thanks for all his kindness, and an affectionate farewell. When this was announced to the party they expressed great regret at his absence. It seemed to surprise them all. Mrs Carmichael was full of wonder on the occasion ; but Miss Mowbray seemed totally unmoved by his departure. She was duller in spirits than before, and refused to dance ; but in other respects the mirth was as uproarious, and the dancing as joyous, as ever ;—and in a day the snow was sufficiently cleared away—the party by different conveyances broke up—and the laird was left alone, after a week of constant enjoyment.

Four years after the events I have related, a young man presented himself for the first time in the pump-room at Bath. The gossips of that busy city formed many conjectures as to who and what he could be. Some thought him a foreigner, some a man of consequence *incog.* ; but all agreed that he was a soldier and an invalid. He seemed to be about six-and-twenty, and was evidently a perfect stranger. After he had stayed in the room a short time, and listened to the music, he went out into the street, and just as he made his exit by one door, the marvels of the old beldames who congregated under the orchestra were called into activity by the entrance, through the other, of a young lady leaning on the arm of an old one. Even so simple an incident as this is sufficient in a place like Bath to give rise to various rumours and conjectures. She was tall, fair, and very beautiful, but she also seemed in bad health, and to be perfectly unknown. Such an event had not occurred at the pump-room for ages before. Even the master of the ceremonies was at fault.

"As near as he could guess, to the best of his conjecture, he believed he had never seen either the gentleman or the lady."

While surmises of all kinds were going their rounds in this manner, the gentleman pursued his walk up Milsom Street. His pace was slow, and his strength did not seem equal even to so gentle an exertion. He leant for support upon his walking-stick, and heard, mingled with many coughs, a voice which he well knew, calling,—

"Chairlie—Chairlie Melville, I say! pull, ye deil's buckie,—ugh—ugh!—sic a confounded conveyance for a Highland gentleman. Ah, Chairlie, lad," said our old acquaintance the laird, who had now got up to where his friend was standing, "sad times for baith of us. Here am I sent here wi' a cough that wad shake a kirk, ugh—ugh.—An' the gout in baith my feet,—to be hurled about in a chair that gangs upon wheels,—ugh—ugh,—by a lazy English vagabond that winna understand a word that I say till him.—An' you," and here the old man looked up in the young soldier's face—"Oh, Chairlie, Chairlie! is this what the wars hae brocht ye to?—ugh—ugh—yer verra mither wadna ken ye,—but come awa,—come awa to my lodgings in Pultney Street, and tell us a' about what ye've been doin',—ugh—ugh,—my fit, my fit, —pu' awa', ye ne'er-do-well; turn about, and be hanged till ye,—do ye no ken the road to Pultney Street yet? Come awa, Chairlie, my man, dinna hurry." And thus mingling his commands to his chairman, with complaints of the gout to his friend, the laird led the way to his lodgings.

Charlie's story was soon told. He had shared in all the dangers and triumphs of the last three years of the war. He had been severely wounded at Waterloo, and had come to Bath with a debilitated frame and a major's commission. But though he spoke of

past transactions as gaily as he could, the quick eyes of the laird perceived there was some "secret sorrow" which weighed down his spirits.

"An' did ye meet with nae love adventure in your travels? For ye maunna tell me a bit wound in the shouther would mak ye sae doun-hearted as ye are. Is there nae Spanish or French lassie that gies ye a sair heart? Tell it a' to me, an' if I can be of ony use in bringin' it about, ye may depend I'll do all in my power to help ye."

"No," replied Charles, smiling at the continued match-making propensities of his friend; "I shall scarcely require your services on that score. I never saw Frenchwoman or Spaniard that cost me a single sigh." And here, as if by the force of the word itself, the young man sighed.

"Weel, it must be some English or Scotch lassie then; for it's easy to be seen that somebody costs ye a sigh. I ance thocht you were in a fair way o' winnin' yon bonny cratur ye saved frae the spate o' the Lugas; but ye gaed awa in such a hurry the plant hadn't time to tak root."

"She was too rich for the poor penniless subaltern to look to," replied the young man, a deep glow coming over his face.

"Havers! havers! She wad hae given a' her lands yon night for a foot o' dry grund. An' as ye won her, ye had the best right to wear her. And I'm muckle mista'en if the lassie didna think sae hersel."

"Miss Mowbray must have overrated my services; but at all events I had no right to take advantage of that fortunate accident to better my fortunes, by presuming on her feelings of gratitude to her preserver."

"What for no? what for no?" cried the laird; "ye should hae married her on the spot. There were eight couples sprang frae the snaw-meeting—ye

should hae made the ninth, and then ye needna hae had a ball put through your shouther, nor ever moved frae the braw holmes o' Surrey. 'Od, I wish it had been me that took her out o' the water ; that is, if I had been as young as you, and Providence had afflicted me with the loss o' Mrs Kirkton."

"If I had been on a level with her as to fortune"—

"Weel, but noo yer brither's dead, ye're heir o' the auld house, an' ye're a major—what's to forbid the banns noo?"

"I have never heard of Miss Mowbray from that hour to this. In all probability she is married to some lucky fellow"—

"She wasna married when I saw Mrs Carmichael four months since ; she was in what leddies call delicate health though ; she had aye been melancholy since the time of the water business. Mrs Carmichael thought ye were a great fule for rinnin' awa."

"Mrs Carmichael is very kind."

"Deed is she," replied the laird, "as kind-hearted a woman as ever lived. She's maybe a thocht ower auld, or I dinna doubt she wad be very happy to marry you hersel."

"I hope her gratitude would not carry her to such an alarming length," said Charles, laughing. "It would make young men rather tender of saving ladies' lives."

"If I knew where she was just now, I wad soon put everything to rights. It's no ower late yet, though ye maun get fatter before the marriage—ye wad be mair like a skeleton than a bridegroom. But, save us ! what's the matter wi' ye ? are ye no weel ? headache ? gout ? what is't, man ? Confound my legs, I canna stir. Sit down, and rest ye."

But Charles, with his eyes intently fixed on some object in the street, gazed as if some horrible apparition had met his sight. Alternately flushed and pale, he continued as if entranced, and then,

deeply sighing, sunk senseless on the floor.

"Rory, Rory !" screamed the laird —"ugh, ugh ! oh, that I could get at the bell ! Cheer up, Chairlie. Fire ! fire ! ugh, ugh !—the lad will be dead before a soul comes near him. Rory, Rory !"

And luckily the ancient henchman, Rory MacTaggart, made his appearance in time to save his master from choking through fear and surprise. Charlie was soon recovered, and, when left again alone with the laird, he said—

"As I hope to live, I saw her from this very window, just as we were speaking of her. Even her face I saw ! Oh, so changed and pale ! But her walk—no *two* can have such a graceful carriage !"

"Seen wha ?" said the laird. "Mrs Carmichael ? For it was her we were speaking o'—ay, she's sair changed ; and her walk is weel kent ; only I thocht she was a wee stiffer frae the rheumatism last year. But whaur is she ?"

"It was Miss Mowbray I saw. She went into that house opposite."

"What ! the house wi' the brass knocker, green door—the verandah with the flower-pots, an' twa dead geraniums ?"

"Yes."

"Then just ring the bell, and tell that English cratur to pu' me in the wee whirligig across the street."

"Impossible, my dear laird ! recollect your gout."

"Deil hae the gout and the cough too ! Order the chair ; I'll see if it's her in five minutes."

And away, in spite of all objections and remonstrances, went the laird to pay his visit. Now, if any one should doubt of the success of his negotiations, I—the writer of this story—Charles Melville, late major, —th regiment, shall be happy to convince him of it, if

he will drop in on me any day at Mowbray Hall, by my own evidence, and also that of my happy and still beautiful Madeline, though she is the mother of three rosy children, who at this moment are making such an intolerable noise that I cannot understand a sentence I am writing. I may just mention, that the laird attended the wed-

ding, and that his cough entirely left him. He does not suffer an attack of the gout more than once a year. He has adopted my second boy, and every autumn we spend three months with him at Strath Lugas. Oh, that all match-makers were as innocent and disinterested as jolly old Simon Kirkton!—*Blackwood's Magazine*.

E Z R A P E D E N.

BY ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

I sat and watched while all men slept, and lo!
Between the green earth and the deep green sea
I saw bright spirits pass, pure as the touch
Of May's first finger on the eastern hill.
Behind them followed fast a little cloud;
And from the cloud an evil spirit came—
A damnèd shape—one who in the dark pit
Held sovereign sway; and power to him was
given
To chase the blessèd spirits from the earth,
And rule it for a season.

Soon he shed
His hellish slough, and many a subtle wile
Was his to seem a heavenly spirit to man.
First he a hermit, sore subdued in flesh,
O'er a cold cruse of water and a crust,
Poured out meek prayers abundant. Then he
changed
Into a maid when she first dreams of man,

And from beneath two silken eyelids sent
The sidelong light of two such wondrous
eyes,
That all the saints grew sinners. He subdued
Those wanton smiles, and grew a reverend
dame,
With wintry ringlets, and grave lips, which
dropt
Proverbial honey in her grandson's ear.
Then a professor of God's Word he seemed,
And o'er a multitude of upturned eyes
Showered blessed dews, and made the pitchy
path,
Down which howl damnèd spirits, seem the
bright
Thrice-hallowed way to heaven. Yet grimly
through
The glorious veil of those seducing shapes
Frowned out the fearful spirit.

CHAPTER I.

THE religious legend which supplies my story with the motto, affords me no further assistance in arranging and interpreting the various traditional remembrances of the colloquies between one of the chiefs of the ancient Presbyterian Kirk and one of the inferior spirits of darkness. It is seldom that tradition requires any illustration; its voice is clear, and its language simple. It seeks to conceal nothing; what it can explain it explains, and scorns, in the homely accuracy of its protracted details, all

mystery and reservation. But in the present story, there is much which the popular spirit of research would dread to have revealed;—a something too mystical and hallowed to be sought into by a devout people. Often as I have listened to it, I never heard it repeated without mutual awe in the teller and the auditor. The most intrepid peasant becomes graver and graver as he proceeds, stops before the natural termination of the story, and hesitates to pry into the supernatural darkness of the

tradition. It would be unwise, therefore, to seek to expound or embellish the legend,—it shall be told as it was told to me ; I am but as a humble priest responding from the traditional oracles, and the words of other years pass without change from between my lips.

Ezra Peden was one of the shepherds of the early Presbyterian flock, and distinguished himself as an austere and enthusiastic pastor ; fearless in his ministration, delighting in wholesome discipline, and guiding in the way of grace the peer as well as the peasant. He grappled boldly with the infirmities and sins of the times ; he spared not the rod in the way of his ministry ; and if in the time of peril he laid his hand on the sword, in the time of peace his delight was to place it on the horns of the altar. He spared no vice, he compounded with no sin, and he discussed men's claims to immortal happiness with a freedom which made them tremble. Amid the fervour of his eloquence, he aspired, like some of his fellow-professors of that period, to the prophetic mantle. Plain and simple in his own apparel, he counted the mitred glory and exterior magnificence of the hierarchy a sin and an abomination, and preferred preaching on a wild hill, or in a lonesome glen, to the most splendid edifice.

Wherever he sojourned, dance and song fled ;—the former he accounted a devoting of limbs which God made to the worship of Satan ; the latter he believed to be a sinful meting out of wanton words to a heathen measure. Satan, he said, leaped and danced, and warbled and sung, when he came to woo to perdition the giddy sons and daughters of men. He dictated the colour and the cut of men's clothes—it was seemly for those who sought salvation to seek it in a sober suit ; and the ladies of his parish were obliged to humble their finery, and soberdown their pride, before his sarcastic sermons on

(7)

female paintings, and plumings, and perfumings, and the unloveliness of love-locks. He sought to make a modest and sedate grace abound among women ; courtship was schooled and sermoned into church controversy, and love into mystical professions ; the common civilities between the sexes were doled out with a suspicious hand and a jealous charity, and the primrose path through the groves of dalliance to the sober vale of marriage was planted with thorns and sown with briars.

He had other endowments not uncommon among the primitive teachers of the Word. In his day, the empire of the prince of darkness was more manifest among men than now, and his ministry was distinguished, like the reign of King Saul, by the persecution of witches, and elves, and evil spirits. He made himself the terror of all those who dealt in divinations, or consulted the stars, or sought to avert witchcraft by sinful spell and charm, instead of overcoming it by sorrowings and spiritual watchings. The midnight times of planetary power he held as the prime moments of Satan's glory on earth, and he punished Hallowmas revellers as chief priests in the infernal rites. He consigned to church censure and the chastening of rods a wrinkled dame who sold a full sea and a fair wind to mariners, and who insulted the apostles, and made a mystical appeal to the twelve signs of heaven in setting a brood goose with a dozen eggs. His wrath, too, was observed to turn against all those who compounded with witches, and people who carried evil influence in their eyes—this was giving tribute to the fiend, and bribing the bottomless pit.

He rebuked the venerable dame, during three successive Sundays, for placing a cream bowl and new-baked cake in the paths of the nocturnal elves who, she imagined, had plotted to steal her grandson from the mother's bosom.

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He turned loose many Scripture threatenings against those diminutive and capricious beings, the fairies, and sought to preach them from the land. He prayed on every green hill, and held communings in every green valley. He wandered forth at night, as a spiritual champion, to give battle to the enemies of the light. The fairies resigned the contest with a foe equipped from such an armoury, and came no more among the sons and daughters of men. The sound of their minstrelsy ceased on the hill ; their equestrian processions were seen no more sweeping past at midnight beneath the beam of the half-filled moon ; and only a solitary and sullen elf or two remained to lament the loss of their immemorial haunts. With the spirits of evil men and the lesser angels of darkness he waged a fierce and dubious war ; he evoked an ancient ghost from a ruined tower, which it had shared for generations with the owl ; and he laid or tranquillized a fierce and troubled spirit which had haunted the abode of a miser in a neighbouring churchyard, and seemed to gibber and mumble over his bones. All these places were purified by prayer, and hallowed by the blessing of the gifted pastor Ezra Peden.

The place of his ministry seemed fitted by nature, and largely endowed by history, for the reception and entertainment of all singular and personified beliefs. Part was maritime, and part mountainous, uniting the aerial creeds of the shepherds with the stern and more imposing beliefs of the husbandman, and the wild and characteristic superstitions of the sailors. It often happened, when he had marched against and vanquished a sin or a superstition of native growth, he was summoned to wage war with a new foe ; to contend with a legion of errors, and a strange race of spirits from the haunted coasts of Norway or Sweden. All around him on every side were records of the

mouldering influence of the enemies of faith and charity. On the hill where the heathen Odin had appeared to his worshippers in the circle of granite, the pillars of his Runic temple promised to be immortal ; but the god was gone, and his worship was extinct. The sword, the spear, and the banner, had found sanctuary from fields of blood on several lofty promontories ; but shattered towers and dismantled castles told that for a time hatred, oppression, and revenge had ceased to triumph over religion. Persecution was now past and gone, a demon exorcised by the sword had hallowed three wild hills and sanctified two little green valleys with the blood of martyrs. Their grave-stones, bedded among heather or long grass, cried up to heaven against their oppressors in verses which could not surely fail to elude the punishment awarded by the Kirk against poesy. Storms, and quicksands, and unskilful mariners, or, as common belief said, the evil spirits of the deep, had given to the dangerous coast the wrecks of three stately vessels ; and there they made their mansions, and raised whirlwinds, and spread quicksands, and made sand-banks, with a wicked diligence, which neither prayer nor preaching could abate. The forms under which these restless spirits performed their pranks have unfortunately been left undefined by a curious and poetical peasantry.

It happened one winter, during the fifteenth year of the ministry of Ezra Peden, and in the year of grace 1705, that he sat by his fire pondering deep among the treasures of the ancient Presbyterian worthies, and listening occasionally to the chafing of the coming tide against cliff and bank, and the fitful sweep of heavy gusts of wind over the roof of his manor. During the day he had seemed more thoughtful than usual ; he had consulted Scripture with an anxious care, and fortified his own interpretation of the sacred text by the

wisdom of some of the chiefs and masters of the calling. A Bible, too, bound in black oak, and clasped with silver, from the page of which sin had received many a rebuke, and the abominations of witchcraft and sorcery had been cleansed from the land, was brought from its velvet sanctuary and placed beside him. Thus armed and prepared, he sat like a watcher of old on the towers of Judah ; like one who girds up his loins and makes bare his right arm for some fierce and dubious contest.

All this stir and preparation passed not unnoticed of an old man, his predecessor's coeval, and prime minister of the household ; a person thin, religious, and faithful, whose gifts in prayer were reckoned by some old people nearly equal to those of the anointed pastor. To such a distinction Josiah never thought of aspiring ; he contented himself with swelling the psalm into something like melody on Sunday ; visiting the sick as a forerunner of his master's approach, and pouring forth prayers and graces at burials and banqueting, as long and dreary as a hill sermon. He looked on the minister as something superior to man ; a being possessed by a divine spirit ; and he shook his head with all its silver hairs, and uttered a gentle groan or two, during some of the more rapt and glowing passages of Ezra's sermons.

This faithful personage stood at the door of his master's chamber, unwilling to go in, and yet loath to depart. "Josiah, thou art called, Josiah," said Ezra, in a grave tone, "so come hither ; the soul of an evil man, a worker of iniquity, is about to depart ; one who drank the blood of saints, and made himself fat with the inheritance of the righteous. It hath been revealed to me that his body is sorely troubled ; but I say unto you, he will not go from the body without the strong compulsion of prayer, and therefore am I summoned

to war with the enemy ; so I shall arm me to the task."

Josiah was tardy in speech, and before he could reply, the clatter of a horse's hoofs was heard at the gate : the rider leapt down, and, splashed with mire and sprinkled with sleet, he stood in an instant before the minister.

"Ah, sir," said the unceremonious messenger, "haste ! snatch up the looms of redemption, and bide not the muttering of prayer, else auld Mahoun will have his friend Bonshaw to his cauldron, body and soul, if he hasna him half-way hame already. Godsake, sir, start and fly, for he cannot shoot over another hour ! He talks of perdition, and speaks about a broad road and a great fire, and friends who have travelled the way before him. He's no his lane, however,—that's one comfort ; for I left him conversing with an old cronicie, whom no one saw but himself—one whose bones are ripe and rotten ; and mickle they talked of a place called Tophet,—a hot enough region, if one can credit them ; but I aye doubt the accounts of such travellers,—they are like the spies of the land of promise"—

"Silence thine irreverent tongue, and think of thy latter end with fear and trembling," said Ezra, in a stern voice. "Mount thy horse, and follow me to the evil man, thy master ; brief is the time, and black is the account, and stern and inexorable will the summoning angel be."

And leaping on their horses, they passed from the manse, and sought out the bank of a little busy stream, which, augmented by a fall of sleet, lifted up a voice amid its rocky and desolate glen equal to the clamour of a mightier brook. The glen or dell was rough with sharp and projecting crags, which, hanging forward at times from opposite sides, seemed to shut out all further way ; while from between their dark-gray masses the rivulet leapt out in many divided streams. The brook

again gathered together its waters, and subsided into several clear deep pools, on which the moon, escaping for a moment from the edge of a cloud of snow, threw a cold and wavering gleam. Along the sweeps of the stream a rough way, shaped more by nature than by the hand of man, winded among the rocks ; and along this path proceeded Ezra, pondering on the vicissitudes of human life.

At length he came where the glen expanded, and the sides became steep and woody ; amid a grove of decaying trees, the mansion of Bonshaw rose, square and gray. Its walls of rough granite were high and massive ; the roof, ascending steep and sharp, carried a covering of red sandstone flags ; around the whole the rivulet poured its scanty waters in a deep moat, while a low-browed door, guarded by loopholes, gave it the character of a place of refuge and defence. Though decayed and war-worn now, it had, in former times, been a fair and courtly spot. A sylvan nook or arbour, scooped out of the everlasting rock, was wreathed about with honeysuckle ; a little pool, with a margin studded with the earliest primroses, lay at its entrance ; and a garden, redeemed by the labour of man from the sterile upland, had its summer roses and its beds of lilies, all bearing token of some gentle and departed inhabitant.

As he approached the house, a candle glimmered in a small square window, and threw a line or two of straggling light along the path. At the foot of the decayed porch he observed the figure of a man kneeling, and presently he heard a voice chanting what sounded like a psalm or a lyke-wake hymn. Ezra alighted and approached,—the form seemed insensible of his presence, but stretched his hands towards the tower ; and while the feathery snow descended on his gray hair, he poured his song forth in a slow and melancholy manner.

“I protest,” said the messenger, “here kneels old William Cameron, the Covenanter. Hearken, he pours out some odd old-world malison against Bonshaw. I have heard that the laird hunted him long and sore in his youth, slew his sons, burned his house, threw his two bonny daughters desolate,—that was nae gentle deed, however,—and broke the old mother’s heart with downright sorrow. Sae I canna much blame the dour auld carle for remembering it even now, though the candles of Bonshaw are burning in the socket, and his light will soon be extinguished for ever. Let us hearken to his psalm or his song ; it is no every night we have minstrelsy at Bonshaw gate, I can tell ye that.”

The following are the verses, which have been preserved under the title of “Ane godly exultation of William Cameron, a chosen vessel, over Bonshaw, the persecutor.” I have adopted a plainer, but a less descriptive title—

THE DOWNFALL OF DALZELL.

I.

The wind is cold, the snow falls fast,
The night is dark and late,
As I lift aloud my voice and cry
By the oppressor’s gate.
There is a voice in every hill,
A tongue in every stone ;
The greenwood sings a song of joy,
Since thou art dead and gone ;
A poet’s voice is in each mouth,
And songs of triumph swell,
Glad songs, that tell the gladsome earth
The downfall of Dalzell.

II.

As I raised up my voice to sing,
I heard the green earth say,
Sweet am I now to beast and bird,
Since thou art passed away :
I hear no more the battle shout,
The martyrs’ dying moans ;
My cottages and cities sing
From their foundation-stones ;
The carbine and the culverin’s mute,—
The death-shot and the yell
Are turned into a hymn of joy,
For thy downfall, Dalzell.

III.

I've trod thy banner in the dust,
And caused the raven call
From thy bride-chamber to the owl
Hatched on thy castle wall ;
I've made thy minstrels' music dumb,
And silent now to fame
Art thou, save when the orphan casts
His curses on thy name.
Now thou may'st say to good men's prayers
A long and last farewell :
There's hope for every sin save thine,—
Adieu, adieu, Dalzell !

IV.

The grim pit opes for thee her gates,
Where punished spirits wail,
And ghastly Death throws wide his door,
And hails thee with a Hail.
Deep from the grave there comes a voice,
A voice with hollow tones,
Such as a spirit's tongue would have
That spoke through hollow bones :—
“Arise, ye martyred men, and shout
From earth to howling hell ;
He comes, the persecutor comes !
All hail to thee, Dalzell !”

V.

O'er an old battle-field there rushed
A wind, and with a moan
The severed limbs all rustling rose,
Even fellow bone to bone.
“Lo ! there he goes,” I heard them cry,
“Like babe in swathing band,
Who shook the temples of the Lord,
And passed them 'neath his brand.
Cursed be the spot where he was born,
There let the adders dwell,
And from his father's hearthstone hiss :
All hail to thee, Dalzell !”

VI.

I saw thee growing like a tree,—
Thy green head touched the sky,—
But birds far from thy branches built,
The wild deer passed thee by ;
No golden dew dropt on thy bough,
Glad summer scorned to grace
Thee with her flowers, nor shepherds wooed
Beside thy dwelling-place ;
The axe has come and hewed thee down,
Nor left one shoot to tell
Where all thy stately glory grew :
Adieu, adieu, Dalzell !

VII.

An ancient man stands by thy gate,
His head like thine is gray ;
Gray with the woes of many years,
Years fourscore and a day.
Five brave and stately sons were his ;
Two daughters, sweet and rare ;
An old dame, dearer than them all,
And lands both broad and fair ;—

Two broke their hearts when two were slain,
And three in battle fell,—
An old man's curse shall cling to thee,—
Adieu, adieu, Dalzell !

VIII.

And yet I sigh to think of thee,
A warrior tried and true
As ever spurred a steed, when thick
The splintering lances flew.
I saw thee in thy stirrups stand,
And hew thy foes down fast,
When Grierson fled, and Maxwell failed,
And Gordon stood aghast ;
And Graeme, saved by thy sword, raged fierce
As one redeemed from hell.
I came to curse thee,—and I weep :
So go in peace, Dalzell !

When this wild and unusual hymn concluded, the Cameronian arose and departed, and Ezra and his conductor entered the chamber of the dying man.

He found him stretched on a couch of state, more like a warrior cut in marble than a breathing being. He had still a stern and martial look, and his tall and stalwart frame retained something of that ancient exterior beauty for which his youth was renowned. His helmet, spoiled by time of its plumage, was placed on his head ; a rusty corslet was on his bosom ; in his arms, like a bride, lay his broad and famous sword ; and as he looked at it, the battles of his youth passed in array before him. Armour and arms hung grouped along the walls, and banners, covered with many a quaint and devotional device, waved in their places as the domestic closed the door on Ezra and the dying warrior in the chamber of presence.

The devout man stood and regarded his ancient parishioner with a meek and sorrowful look ; but nothing visible or present employed Bonshaw's reflections or moved his spirit—his thoughts had wandered back to earlier years, and to scenes of peril and blood. He imagined himself at the head of his horsemen in the hottest period of the persecution, chasing the people from rock to rock, and from glen to cavern. His imagination had presented to his eye the

destruction of the children of William Cameron. He addressed their mother in a tone of ironical supplication,—

“Woman, where is thy devout husband, and thy five holy sons? Are they busied in interminable prayers or everlasting sermons? Whisper it in my ear, woman,—thou hast made that reservation doubtless in thy promise of concealment. Come, else I will wrench the truth out of thee with these gentle catechists, the thumbscrew and the bootikin. Serving the Lord, sayest thou, woman? Why, that is rebelling against the king. Come, come, a better answer, else I shall make thee a bride for a saint on a bloody bed of heather!

Here he paused and waved his hand like a warrior at the head of armed men, and thus he continued,—

“Come, uncock thy carbine, and harm not the woman till she hear the good tidings. Sister saint, how many bairns have ye? I bless God, saith she, five—Reuben, Simon, Levi, Praisegod, and Patrick. A bonny generation, woman. Here, soldier, remove the bandages from the faces of those two young men before ye shoot them. There stands Patrick, and that other is Simon;—dost thou see the youngest of thy affections? The other three are in Sarah’s bosom—thyself shall go to Abraham’s. The woman looks as if she doubted me;—here, toss to her those three heads—often have they lain in her lap, and mickle have they prayed in their time. Out, thou simpleton! canst thou not endure the sight of the heads of thine own fair-haired sons, the smell of powder, and the flash of a couple of carbines?”

The re-acting of that ancient tragedy seemed to exhaust for a little while the old persecutor. He next imagined himself receiving the secret instructions of the Council.

“What, what, my lord, must all this pleasant work fall to me? A reeking house and a crowing cock shall be scarce

things in Nithsdale. Weepings and wailings shall be rife—the grief of mothers, and the moaning of fatherless babes. There shall be smoking ruins and roofless kirks, and prayers uttered in secret, and sermons preached at a venture and a hazard on the high and solitary places. Where is General Turner?—Gone where the wine is good?—And where is Grierson?—Has he begun to talk of repentance?—Gordon thinks of the unquenchable fire which the martyred Cameronian raved about; and gentle Graeme vows he will cut no more throats unless they wear laced cravats. Awell, my lords; I am the king’s servant, and not Christ’s, and shall boune me to the task.”

His fancy flew over a large extent of time, and what he uttered now may be supposed to be addressed to some invisible monitor; he seemed not aware of the presence of the minister.

“Auld, say you, and gray-headed, and the one foot in the grave; it is time to repent, and spice and perfume over my rottenness, and prepare for heaven? I’ll tell ye, but ye must not speak on’t—I tried to pray late yestreen—I knelt down, and I held up my hands to heaven—and what think ye I beheld? a widow woman and her five fair sons standing between me and the Most High, and calling out, ‘Woe, woe, on Bonshaw.’ I threw myself with my face to the earth, and what got I between my hands? A gravestone which covered five martyrs, and cried out against me for blood which I had wantonly shed. I heard voices from the dust whispering around me; and the angel which watched of old over the glory of my house hid his face with his hands, and I beheld the evil spirits arise with power to punish me for a season. I’ll tell ye what I will do—among the children of those I have slain shall my inheritance be divided; so sit down, holy sir, and sit down, most learned man, and hearken to my

bequest. To the children of three men slain on Irongray Moor—to the children of two slain on Closeburn-hill—to—no, no, no, all that crowd, that multitude, cannot be the descendants of those whom I doomed to perish by the rope, and the pistol, and the sword. Away, I say, ye congregation of zealots and psalm-singers!—disperse, I say, else I shall trample ye down beneath my horse's hoofs! Peace, thou white-headed stirrer of sedition, else I shall cleave thee to the collar!—wilt thou preach still?"

Here the departing persecutor uttered a wild imprecation, clenched his teeth, leaped to his feet, waved his sword, and stood for several moments, his eyes flashing from them a fierce light, and his whole strength gathered into a blow which he aimed at his imaginary adver-

sary. But he stiffened as he stood—a brief shudder passed over his frame, and he was dead before he fell on the floor, and made the hall re-echo.

The minister raised him in his arms—a smile of military joy still dilated his stern face—and his hand grasped the sword hilt so firmly that it required some strength to wrench it from his hold. Sore, sore the good pastor lamented that he had no death-bed communings with the departed chief, and he expressed this so frequently, that the peasantry said, on the day of his burial, that it would bring back his spirit to earth and vex mankind, and that Ezra would find him particularly untractable and bold. Of these whisperings he took little heed, but he became somewhat more grave and austere than usual.

CHAPTER II.

IT happened on an evening about the close of the following spring, when the oat braid was flourishing, and the barley shot its sharp green spikes above the clod, carrying the dew on the third morning, that Ezra Peden was returning from a wedding at Buckletiller. When he left the bridal chamber it was about ten o'clock. His presence had suppressed for a time the natural ardour for dancing and mirth which characterises the Scotch; but no sooner was he mounted, and the dilatory and departing clatter of his horse's hoofs heard, than musicians and musical instruments appeared from their hiding-places. The floor was disencumbered of the bridal dinner-tables, the maids bound up their long hair, and the hinds threw aside their mantles, and, taking their places and their partners, the restrained mirth broke out like a whirlwind. Old men looked on with a sigh, and uttered a feeble and faint remonstrance, which they were not unwilling

should be drowned in the abounding and augmenting merriment.

The pastor had reached the entrance of a little wild and seldom frequented glen, along which a grassy and scarce visible road winded to an ancient burial-ground. Here the graceless and ungodly merriment first reached his ears, and made the woody hollow ring and resound. Horse and rider seemed possessed of the same spirit—the former made a full halt when he heard the fiddle note, while the latter, uttering a very audible groan, and laying the bridle on his horse's neck, pondered on the wisest and most effectual way of repressing this unseemly merriment—of cleansing the parish of this ancient abomination. It was a beautiful night; the unrisen moon had yet a full hour of travel before she could reach the tops of the eastern hills; the wind was mute, and no sound was abroad save the chafing of a small runnel, and the bridal mirth.

While Ezra sat casting in his own mind a long and a dubious contest with this growing and unseemly sin, something like the shadowy outline of a horse and rider appeared in the path. The night was neither light nor dark, and the way, grassy and soft, lay broad and uninterrupted between two hazel and holly groves. As the pastor lifted up his eyes, he beheld a dark rider reining up a dark horse side by side with his own, nor did he seem to want any accoutrement necessary for ruling a fine and intractable steed. As he gazed, the figure became more distinct; it seemed a tall martial form, with a slouched hat and feather, and a dark and ample mantle, which was muffled up to his eyes. From the waist downward all was indistinct, and horse and rider seemed to melt into one dark mass visible in the outline alone. Ezra was too troubled in spirit to court the intrusion of a stranger upon his meditations; he bent on him a look particularly forbidding and stern, and having made up his mind to permit the demon of mirth and minstrelsy to triumph for the present, rode slowly down the glen.

But side by side with Ezra, and step by step, even as shadow follows substance, moved the mute and intrusive stranger. The minister looked at his companion, and stirred his steed onward; with corresponding speed moved the other, till they came where the road branched off to a ruined castle. Up this way, with the wish to avoid his new friend, Ezra turned his horse; the other did the same. The former seemed suddenly to change his mind, and returned to the path that led to the old burial-ground; the latter was instantly at his side, his face still hidden in the folds of his mantle.

Now, Ezra was stern and unaccommodating in kirk controversy, and the meek and gentle spirit of religion, and a sense of spiritual interest, had enough to do to appease and sober down a

temper naturally bold, and even warlike. Exasperated at this intruding stranger, his natural triumphed over his acquired spirit, and lifting his riding-stick, and starting up in his stirrups, he aimed a blow equal to the unhorsing of any ordinary mortal. But the weapon met with no obstruction—it seemed to descend through air alone. The minister gazed with dread on this invulnerable being; the stranger gazed on him; and both made a halt like men preparing for mortal fray. Ezra, who felt his horse shuddering beneath him, began to suspect that his companion pertained to a more dubious state of existence than his own, and his grim look and sable exterior induced him to rank him at once among those infamous and evil spirits which are sometimes permitted to trouble the earth, and to be a torment to the worthy and the devout.

He muttered a brief and pithy prayer, and then said,—

“ Evil shape, who art thou, and wherefore comest thou unto me? If thou comest for good, speak; if for my confusion and my harm, even do thine errand; I shall not fly from thee.”

“ I come more for mine own good than for thy harm,” responded the figure. “ Far have I ridden, and much have I endured, that I might visit thee and this land again.”

“ Do you suffer in the flesh, or are you tortured in the spirit?” said the pastor, desirous to know something certain of his unwelcome companion.

“ In both,” replied the form. “ I have dwelt in the vale of fire, in the den of punishment, hollow, and vast, and dreadful; I have ridden through the region of snow and the land of hail; I have swam through the liquid wilderness of burning lava,—passed an illimitable sea, and all for the love of one hour of this fair green earth, with its fresh airs and its new-sprung corn.”

Ezra looked on the figure with a

steady and a penetrating eye. The stranger endured the scrutiny.

"I must know of a truth to whom and what I speak—I must see you face to face. Thou mayest be the grand artificer of deceit come to practise upon my immortal soul. Unmantle thee, I pray, that I may behold if thou art a poor and an afflicted spirit punished for a time, or that fierce and restless fiend who bears the visible stamp of eternal reprobation."

"I may not withstand thy wish," muttered the form in a tone of melancholy, and dropping his mantle, and turning round on the pastor, said, "Hast thou forgotten me?"

"How can I forget thee?" said Ezra, receding as he spoke. "The stern and haughty look of Bonshaw has been humbled indeed. Unhappy one, thou art sorely changed since I beheld thee on earth with the helmet-plume fanning thy hot and bloody brow as thy right hand smote down the blessed ones of the earth! The Almighty doom—the evil and the tormenting place—the vile companions—have each in their turn done the work of retribution upon thee; thou art indeed more stern and more terrible, but thou art not changed beyond the knowledge of one whom thou hast hunted and hounded, and sought to slay utterly."

The shape or spirit of Bonshaw, dilated with anger, and in a quicker and fiercer tone, said—

"Be charitable; flesh and blood, be charitable. Doom not to hell-fire and grim companions one whose sins thou canst not weigh but in the balance of thine own prejudices. I tell thee, man of God, the uncharitableness of the sect to which thou pertainest has thronged the land of punishment as much as those who headed, and hanged, and stabbed, and shot, and tortured. I may be punished for a time, and not wholly reprobate."

"Punished in part, or doomed in

whole, thou needs must be," answered the pastor, who seemed now as much at his ease as if this singular colloquy had happened with a neighbouring divine. "A holy and a blessed spirit would have appeared in a brighter shape. I like not thy dubious words, thou half-punished and half-pardoned spirit. Away, vanish! shall I speak the sacred words which make the fiends howl, or wilt thou depart in peace?"

"In peace I come to thee," said the spirit, "and in peace let me be gone. Hadst thou come sooner when I summoned thee, and not loitered away the precious death-bed moments, hearkening the wild and fanciful song of one whom I have deeply wronged, this journey might have been spared—a journey of pain to me, and peril to thyself."

"Peril to me!" said the pastor; "be it even as thou sayest. Shall I fly for one cast down, over whose prostrate form the purging fire has passed? Wicked was thy course on earth—many and full of evil were thy days—and now thou art loose again, thou fierce and persecuting spirit,—a woe, and a woe to poor Scotland!"

"They are loose who never were bound," answered the spirit of Bonshaw, darkening in anger, and expanding in form, "and that I could soon show thee. But, behold, I am not permitted;—there is a watcher—a holy one come nigh prepared to resist and to smite. I shall do thee no harm, holy man—I vow by the pains of punishment and the conscience-pang—now the watcher has departed."

"Of whom speakest thou?" inquired Ezra. "Have we ministering spirits who guard the good from the plots of the wicked ones? Have we evil spirits who tempt and torment men, and teach the maidens ensnaring songs, and lighten their feet and their heads for the wanton dance?"

"Stay, I pray thee," said the spirit;

"there are spirits of evil men and of good men made perfect, who are permitted to visit the earth, and power is given them for a time to work their will with men. I beheld one of the latter even now, a bold one and a noble ; but he sees I mean not to harm thee, so we shall not war together."

At this assurance of protection, the pastor inclined his shuddering steed closer to his companion, and thus he proceeded :—

" You have said that my sect—my meek and lowly, and broken, and long persecuted remnant—have helped to people the profound hell ; am I to credit thy words ? "

" Credit them or not as thou wilt," said the spirit ; " whoso spilleth blood by the sword, by the word, and by the pen, is there : the false witness ; the misinterpreter of the Gospel ; the profane poet ; the profane and presumptuous preacher ; the slayer and the slain ; the persecutor and the persecuted ; he who died at the stake, and he who piled the faggot ;—all are there, enduring hard weird and penal fire for a time reckoned and days numbered. They are there whom thou wottest not of," said the confiding spirit, drawing near as he spoke, and whispering the names of some of the worthies of the Kirk, and the noble, and the fardescended.

" I well believe thee," said the pastor ; " but I beseech thee to be more particular in thy information : give me the names which some of the chief ministers of woe in the nether world were known by in this. I shall hear of those who built cathedrals and strongholds, and filled thrones spiritual and temporal."

" Ay, that thou wilt," said the spirit, " and the names of some of the mantled professors of God's humble Presbyterian Kirk also ; those who preached a burning fire and a devouring hell to their dissenting brethren, and who called out with a loud voice, ' Perdition to the

sons and daughters of men ; draw the sword ; slay and smite utterly.' "

" Thou art a false spirit assuredly," said the pastor ; " yet tell me one thing. Thy steed and thou seem to be as one, to move as one, and I observed thee even now conversing with thy brute part ; dost thou ride on a punished spirit, and is there injustice in hell as well as on earth ? "

The spirit laughed.

" Knowest thou not this patient and obedient spirit on whom I ride ?—what wouldest thou say if I named a name renowned at the holy altar ? the name of one who loosed the sword on the bodies of men, because they believed in a humble Saviour, and he believed in a lofty. I have bestrode that mitred personage before now ; he is the hack to all the Presbyterians in the pit, but he cannot be spared on a journey so distant as this."

" So thou wilt not tell me the name of thy steed ? " said Ezra ; " well, even as thou wilt."

" Nay," said the spirit, " I shall not deny so good a man so small a matter. Knowest thou not George Johnstone, the captain of my troop,—as bold a hand as ever bore a sword and used it among fanatics ? We lived together in life, and in death we are not divided."

" In persecution and in punishment, thou mightest have said, thou scoffing spirit," said the pastor. " But tell me, do men lord it in perdition as they did on earth ; is there no retributive justice among the condemned spirits ? "

" I have condescended on that already," said the spirit, " and I will tell thee further : there is thy old acquaintance and mine, George Gordon ; punished and condemned though he be, he is the scourge, and the whip, and the rod of fire to all those brave and valiant men who served those equitable and charitable princes, Charles Stewart, and James, his brother."

" I suspect why those honourable

cavaliers are tasting the cup of punishment," said the pastor; "but what crime has sedate and holy George done that his lot is cast with the wicked?"

"Canst thou not guess it, holy Ezra?" answered the spirit. "His crime was so contemptible and mean that I scorn to name it. Hast thou any further questions?"

"You spoke of Charles Stuart, and James, his brother," said the pastor; "when sawest thou the princes for whom thou didst deluge thy country with blood, and didst peril thine own soul?"

"Ah! thou cunning querist," said the spirit, with a laugh; "canst thou not ask a plain question? Thou askest questions plain and pointed enough of the backsliding damsels of thy congregation—why shouldst thou put thy sanctified tricks on me, a plain and straightforward spirit, as ever uttered response to the godly? Nevertheless, I will tell thee; I saw them not an hour ago—Charles saddled me my steed; wot ye who held my stirrup?—even James, his brother. I asked them if they had any message to the devout people of their ancient kingdom of Scotland. The former laughed, and bade me bring him the kirk repentance-stool for a throne. The latter looked grave, and muttered over his fingers like a priest counting his beads; and hell echoed far and wide with laughter at the two princes."

"Ay, ay!" said the pastor; "so I find you have mirth among you: have you dance and song also?"

"Ay, truly," answered the spirit; "we have hymns and hallelujahs from the lips of that holy and patriotic band who banished their native princes, and sold their country to an alien; and the alien himself rules and reigns among them; and when they are weary with the work of praise, certain inferior and officious spirits moisten their lips with cupfuls of a curious and cooling liquid,

and then hymn and thanksgiving recommence again."

"Ah, thou dissembler," said the minister; "and yet I see little cause why they should be redeemed, when so many lofty minds must wallow with the sinful for a season. But, tell me; it is long since I heard of Claud Hamilton,—have you seen him among you? He was the friend and follower of the alien—a mocker of the mighty minds of his native land—a scoffer of that gifted and immortal spirit which pours the glory of Scotland to the uttermost ends of the earth—tell me of him, I pray."

Loud laughed the spirit, and replied in scorn—

"We take no note of things so mean and unworthy as he; he may be in some hole in perdition, for aught I know or care. But, stay; I will answer thee truly. He has not passed to our kingdom yet; he is condemned to the punishment of a long and useless life on earth; and even now you will find him gnawing his flesh in agony to hear the name he has sought to cast down renowned over all the earth."

The spirit now seemed impatient to be gone; they had emerged from the glen; and vale and lea, brightened by the moon, and sown thick with evening dew, sparkled far and wide.

"If thou wouldst question me farther," said the frank and communicative spirit of Bonshaw, "and learn more of the dead, meet me in the old burial-ground an hour before moon-rise on Sunday night: tarry at home if thou wilt; but I have more to tell thee than thou knowest to ask about; and hair of thy head shall not be harmed."

Even as he spoke the shape of horse and rider underwent a sudden transformation—the spirit sank into the shape of a steed, the steed rose into the form of the rider, and wrapping his visionary mantle about him, and speaking to his unearthly horse, away he started, cast-

ing as he flew a sudden and fiery glance on the astonished pastor, who muttered, as he concluded a brief prayer,—

“There goes Captain George Johnstone, riding on his fierce old master!”

CHAPTER III.

THE old burial-ground, the spirit's trysting-place, was a fair but a lonely spot. All around lay scenes renowned in tradition for blood, and broil, and secret violence. The parish was formerly a land of warrior's towers, and of houses for penance, and vigil, and mortification. But the Reformation came, and sacked and crushed down the houses of devotion; while the peace between the two kingdoms curbed the courage, and extinguished for ever the military and predatory glory of those old Galwegian chieftains. It was in a burial-ground pertaining to one of those ancient churches, and where the peasants still loved to have their dust laid, that Ezra trusted to meet again the shadowy representative of the fierce old Laird of Bonshaw.

The moon, he computed, had a full hour to travel before her beams would be shed on the place of conference, and to that eerie and deserted spot Ezra was observed to walk like one consecrating an evening hour to solitary musing on the rivulet side. No house stood within half a mile; and when he reached the little knoll on which the chapel formerly stood, he sat down on the summit to ponder over the way to manage this singular conference. A firm spirit, and a pure heart, he hoped, would confound and keep at bay the enemy of man's salvation; and he summed up, in a short historical way, the names of those who had met and triumphed over the machinations of fiends. Thus strengthened and reassured, he rose and looked around, but he saw no approaching shape. The road along which he expected the steed and rider to come was empty; and he walked towards the broken

gate, to cast himself in the way, and show with what confidence he abode his coming.

Over the wall of the churchyard, repaired with broken and carved stones from the tombs and altar of the chapel, he now looked, and it was with surprise that he saw a new made widow kneeling over her husband's grave, and about to pour out her spirit in lamentation and sorrow. He knew her form and face, and the deepest sorrow came upon him. She was the daughter of an old and a faithful elder: she had married a seafaring youth, and borne him one fair child. Her husband was returning from a distant voyage; had entered the sea of Solway; his native hills—his own home—rose to his view, and he saw the light streaming from the little chamber window, where his wife and his sweet child sat awaiting his return. But it was not written that they were to meet again in life. She heard the sweep of a whirlwind, and she heard a shriek, and going to her chamber-door, she saw the ship sinking, and her husband struggling in the agitated water. It is needless to lengthen a sorrowful story: she now threw herself weeping over his grave, and poured out the following wail:

“He was the fairest among men, yet the sea swept him away: he was the kindest hearted, yet he was not to remain. What were all other men compared to him,—his long curling hair, and his sweet hazel eyes, and his kind and gladsome tongue? He loved me long, and he won me from many rivals; for who could see his face, and not love him? who could listen to his speech, and refuse him aught?

When he danced, maids stood round, and thought his feet made richer music than the instruments. When he sang, the maids and matrons blessed him ; and high-born dames loved the song of my frank and gentle sailor. But there is no mercy in the ocean for the sons of men ; and there is nought but sorrow for their daughters. Men go gray-headed to the grave, who, had they trusted the unstable deeps, would have perished in their prime, and left fatherless babes, and sorrowing widows. Alas, alas ! in lonely night, on this eerie spot, on thy low and early grave, I pour forth my heart ! Who now shall speak peace to my mind, and open the latch of my little lonely home with thy kind and anxious hand ? Who now shall dandle my sweet babe on his knee, or love to go with me to kirk and to preaching,—to talk over our old tales of love and courtship,—of the secret tryst and the bridal joy ! ”

And, concluding her melancholy chant, she looked sorrowfully and steadfastly at the grave, and recommenced anew her wailing and her tears.

The widow’s grief endured so long that the moon began to make her approach manifest by shooting up a long and a broad stream of thin, lucid, and trembling light over the eastern ridge of the Cumberland hills. She rose from her knees, shed back her moist and disordered locks, showing a face pale but lovely, while the watery light of two large dark eyes, of liquid and roving blue, was cast mournfully on the way homewards, down which she now turned her steps to be gone. Of what passed in the pastor’s mind at this moment, tradition, which sometimes mocks, and at other times deifies, the feelings of men, gives a very unsatisfactory account. He saw the hour of appointment with his shadowy messenger from the other world arrive and pass without his appearance ; and he

was perhaps persuaded that the pure, and pious, and overflowing grief of the fair young widow had prevented the intrusion of a form so ungracious and unholy. As she advanced from the burial-ground, the pastor of her parish stood mute and sorrowful before her. She passed him as one not wishing to be noticed, and glided along the path with a slow step and a downcast eye.

She had reached the side of a little lonely stream, which glided half seen, half hid, underneath its banks of broom and honeysuckle, sprinkled at that hour with wild daisies, and spotted with primroses—when the voice of Ezra reached her ears. She made a full stop, like one who hears something astounding, and turned round on the servant of the altar a face radiant with tears, to which her tale of woe, and the wild and lonely place, added an interest and a beauty.

“ Young woman,” he began, “ it is unseemly in thee to bewail thy loss at this lonely hour, and in this dreary spot : the youth was given to thee, and ye became vain. I remarked the pride of thy looks, and the gaudiness of thine apparel, even in the house of holiness ; he is taken from thee, perhaps, to punish thy pride. There is less meekness in thy sorrow than there was reason in thy joy ; but be ye not discomfited.”

Here the weeping lady turned the sidelong glance of her swimming eyes on Ezra, shed back the locks which usurped a white brow and snowy temples, and folding her hands over a bosom, the throbings of which made the cambric that concealed it undulate like water, stood still, and drank in his words of comfort and condolence.

Tradition always conducts Ezra and the mariner’s widow to this seldom frequented place. A hundred and a hundred times have I mused over the scene in sunlight and moonlight ; a hundred and a hundred times have I

hearkened to the wild and variable accounts of the peasantry, and sought to make bank, and bush, and stream, and tree assist in unravelling the mystery which must still hang over the singular and tragic catastrophe. Standing in this romantic place, a pious man, not over-stricken in years, conversing with a rosy young widow, a vain and a fair creature, a bank of blossomed flowers beside them, and the new risen moon scattering her slant and ineffectual beams on the thick budded branches above them,—such is the picture which tradition invariably draws, while imagination endeavours to take up the tender thread of the story, and imagination must have this licence still. Truth contents herself with the summary of a few and unsatisfactory particulars. The dawn of morning came, says Truth, and Ezra had not returned to his manse. Something evil hath happened, said Imagination, scattering as she spoke a thousand tales of a thousand hues, many of which still find credence among the pious people of Galloway.

Josiah, the old and faithful servant of Ezra, arrived in search of his master at the lonely burial-ground, about the dawn of the morning. He had become alarmed at his long absence, and his alarm was not abated by the unholy voices which at midnight sailed round the manse and kirk, singing, as he imagined, a wild and infernal hymn of joy and thanksgiving. He traced his steps down the footpath by the rivulet side till he came to the little primrose bank, and found it trodden upon and pressed as if two persons had been seated among the flowers. Here all further traces ceased, and Josiah stood pondering on the power of evil spirits, and the danger of holding tryst with Beelzebub or any of the lesser spirits of darkness.

He was soon joined by an old shepherd, who told a tale which pious men refuse to believe, though they always

listen to it. The bright moonlight had made him imagine it was morning, and he arose and walked forth to look at his lambs on the distant hill—the moon had been up for nearly an hour. His way lay near the little lonely primrose bank, and as he walked along he heard the whispering of tongues : he deemed it some idle piece of lovemaking, and he approached to see who they might be. He saw what ought not to be seen, even the reverend Ezra seated on the bank, and conversing with a buxom young dame and a strange one. They were talking wondrous kindly. He observed them for a little space ; the young dame was in widow's weeds ; the mariner's widow wore the only weeds, praise be blest, in the parish, but she was a raven to a swan compared to the quean who conversed with the minister. She was indeed passing fair, and the longer he looked on her she became the lovelier—ower lovely for mere flesh and blood. His dog shrunk back and whimpered, and an owl that chased a bird in the grove uttered a scream of terror as it beheld her, and forsook its prey. At length she turned the light of her eyes on himself ; Will-o'-the-wisp was but a proverb to them ; they had a glance he should never get the better of, and he hardly thought his legs carried him home, he flew with such supernatural speed.

"But, indeed," added the cautious peasant, "I have some doubts that the whole was a fiction of the auld enemy, to make me think ill of the douce man and the godly ; and if he be spared to come home, so I shall tell him. But if Ezra, pious man, is heard of nae mair, I shall be free to believe that what I heard I heard, and what I saw I saw. And Josiah, man, I may as weel give you the benefit of my own opinion. I'll amait aver on my Bible, that the minister, a daring man and a courageous,—ower courageous, I doubt,—has been dared out to the lonely place by some

he, or, maybe, she-fiend—the latter maist likely ; and there he has been overcome by might or temptation, and now Satan may come between the stilts of the gospel plough, for the right hand of Ezra will hold it no longer ; or I shouldna wonder,” added the shepherd, “but that the old dour persecutor Bonshaw has carried him away on his fiend-steed Geordie Johnstone ; conscience ! nought mair likely ; and I’ll warrant even now they are ducking him in the dub of perdition, or picking his banes ahint the hallan o’ hell.”

The whole of this rustic prediction was not fulfilled. In a little deep wild dell, at the distance of a gunshot, they found Ezra Peden lying on the ground,

uttering words which will be pardoned, since they were the words of a delirious tongue. He was carried home amid the sympathy and sorrow of his parishioners ; he answered no question, nor seemed to observe a single face, though the face of many a friend stood round him. He only raved out words of tenderness and affection, addressed to some imaginary person at his side ; and concluded by starting up, and raising such an outcry of horror and amazement, as if the object of his regard had become a demon : seven strong men could hardly hold him. He died on the third day, after making a brief disclosure, which may be readily divined from this hasty and imperfect narrative.

YOUNG RONALD OF MORAR :

A TRADITIONARY TALE OF THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS.

ANGUS MACDONALD, a son of Claranald, having quarrelled with his neighbour and namesake, the Laird of Morar, he made an irruption into that district, at the head of a select portion of his followers. One of his men was celebrated for his dexterity as a marksman ; and on their march he gave a proof of this, by striking the head off the *canna*, or moss cotton, with an arrow. This plant is common on mossy ground in the Highlands ; it is as white as the driven snow, and not half the size of the lily.

Having got possession of the cattle, Angus was driving away the *spreith* to his own country ; but Dugald of Morar pursued him with a few servants who happened to be at hand ; and, being esteemed a man of great bravery, Angus had no wish to encounter him. He ordered the marksman to shoot him with an arrow ; but the poor fellow, being unwilling to injure Dugald, aimed

high, and overshot him. Angus observed this, and expressed his surprise that a man who could hit the *canna* yesterday, could not hit Dugald’s broad forehead that day ; and drawing his sword, swore that he would cleave the marksman’s head should he miss him again. John then reluctantly drew his bow, and Dugald fell to rise no more.

Angus got into his hands the only son of the dreaded Morar, then very young ; and the treatment which the unfortunate boy received was calculated to injure his health and shorten his life. A poor girl, who attended the calves, had pity on him, and at last contrived to carry him away, wrapped up in a large fleece of wool. Having escaped from her pursuers, she made her way to the house of Cameron of Lochiel. Here she and the boy were most hospitably received ; and, according to the custom of the country in those days, they passed a year and a day without being asked

any question. At the end of that period, Lochiel made inquiry regarding the boy, and the girl candidly told him her story. He thus discovered that the boy was the son of his own wife's sister ; but he concealed the whole from his lady, of whose secrecy he was not very confident. But he treated young Ronald with great kindness. Lochiel had a son much of the same age ; the two boys frequently quarrelled, and the lady was angry to see her own son worsted. She at last swore that "the girl and her vagabond must quit the house next morning." The generous Lochiel set out with the boy to Inverness, where he boarded him under a false name, and placed the woman in the service of a friend in the neighbourhood, that she might have an eye to his condition.

Ronald received such education as befitted his birth ; and when he grew up to manhood, he paid a visit to Lochiel, his kind benefactor, in Lochaber, who was so much satisfied with him, that he determined on giving him his powerful assistance in recovering his paternal estate, which was then in the possession of Angus.

Lochiel ordered a hundred men to attend himself and Ronald on this occasion ; and they arrived in Morar on a Sunday, when the usurper and all his people were in church at mass. He congratulated the young man on the opportunity he now had of avenging his father's blood, and destroying all his enemies at once, by burning them in the church. Ronald humanely objected, that though many of those persons then in the church were guilty of his father's death, yet there were others innocent of that crime ; and he declared that if his estate could not be recovered otherwise, he would rather want it, and trust to Providence and his own valour. Lochiel did not at all relish such sentiments, and left Ronald to his fate.

Ronald took refuge in a cavern, and

the daughter of Angus, his only child, frequently passed that way, in looking after her father's fold. He sometimes got into conversation with her ; and, though but a child, she became attached to him. He prevailed upon her to get his shirts washed for him. Her father having accidentally discovered the linen bleaching, observed the initial letters of Ronald's name ; and making inquiry into the circumstances, soon suspected that he was at hand. He attempted to persuade his daughter to decoy Ronald into his power ; but she told the young man all that her father proposed to her ; and he, finding that Angus was still thirsting for his blood, immediately left the country, and took the girl along with him. With much difficulty he conveyed her in safety to Inverness, from whence he procured a passage to France, where he placed her in a convent. He entered the French army, and was much distinguished for his bravery ; he was thus enabled to support himself, and to defray the expense of her education. When the young woman was of age, they were married, and returned to Scotland. Ronald having obtained strong recommendations to the king, he found means of being reconciled to Angus, who was then old, and had become very penitent. He made great professions of friendship and attachment to Ronald ; but his daughter was always doubtful of his sincerity, and it would appear that she had justly appreciated his disposition. One night, Ronald having feigned intoxication and retired to rest, the old barbarian calculated that he would sleep very soundly, and slunk into his apartment, armed with a dirk, to stab his son-in-law ; but the young man watched the treacherous hypocrite, and put him to death. Ronald obtained possession of his paternal estate, and, after a long and prosperous life, became the founder of a very respectable family.—*Lit. Gazette.*

THE BROKEN RING.

BY ONE OF THE AUTHORS OF THE "ODD VOLUME."

"HOUT, lassie," said the wily Dame Seton to her daughter, "dinna blear your een wi' greeting. What would honest Maister Binks say, if he were to come in the now, and see you looking baith dull and dour? Dight your een, my bairn, and snood back your hair—I'se warrant you'll mak a bonnier bride than ony o' your sisters."

"I carena whether I look bonny or no, since Willie winna see me," said Mary, while her eyes filled with tears. "Oh, mother, ye have been ower hasty in this matter; I canna help thinking he will come hame yet, and make me his wife. It's borne in on my mind that Willie is no dead."

"Put awa such thoughts out o' your head, lassie," answered her mother; "naebody doubts but yoursel that the ship that he sailed in was whumelled ower in the saut sea—what gars you threep he's leeveng that gate?"

"Ye ken, mother," answered Mary, "that when Willie gaed awa on that wearis' voyage, 'to mak the crown a pound,' as the auld sang says, he left a kist o' his best claes for me to tak care o'; for he said he would keep a' his braws for a day that's no like to come, and that's our bridal. Now, ye ken it's said, that as lang as the moths keep aff folk's claes, the owner o' them is no dead,—so I e'en took a look o' his bit things the day, and there's no a broken thread among them."

"Ye had little to do to be howking among a dead man's claes," said her mother; "it was a bonny like job for a bride."

"But I'm no a bride," answered Mary, sobbing. "How can ye hae the heart to speak o't, mother, and the year no out since I broke a ring wi' my ain Willie!—Weel hae I keepit my

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half o't; and if Willie is in this world, he'll hae the other as surely."

"I trust poor Willie is in a better place," said the mother, trying to sigh; "and since it has been ordered sae, ye maun just settle your mind to take honest Maister Binks; he's rich, Mary, my dear bairn, and he'll let ye want for naething."

"Riches canna buy true love," said Mary.

"But they can buy things that will last a hantle longer," responded the wily mother; "so, Mary, ye maun tak him, if you would hae me die in peace. Ye ken I can leave ye but little. The house and bit garden maun gang to your brother, and his wife will mak him keep a close hand;—she'll soon let you see the cauld shouther. Poor relations are unco little thought o'; so, lassie, as ye would deserve my benison, dinna keep simmering it and wintering it any longer, but take a gude offer when it's made ye."

"I'll no hae him till the year is out," cried Mary. "Wha kens but the ship may cast up yet?"

"I fancy we'll hae to gie you your ain gate in this matter," replied the dame, "mair especially as it wants but three weeks to the year, and we'll need that to hae ye cried in the kirk, and to get a' your braws ready."

"Oh, mother, mother, I wish ye would let me die!" was Mary's answer, as she flung herself down on her little bed.

Delighted at having extorted Mary's consent to the marriage, Dame Seton quickly conveyed the happy intelligence to her son-in-law elect, a wealthy burgher of Dunbar; and having invited Annot Cameron, Mary's cousin, to visit them, and assist her in cheering the

sorrowful bride, the preparations for the marriage proceeded in due form.

On the day before that appointed for the wedding, as the cousins sat together, arranging the simple ornaments of the bridal dress, poor Mary's feelings could no longer be restrained, and her tears fell fast.

"Dear sake, Mary, gie ower greeting," said Annot; "the bonny white satin ribbon is wringing wet."

"Sing her a canty sang to keep up her heart," said Dame Seton.

"I canna bide a canty sang the day, for there's ane rinnin' in my head that my poor Willie made ae night as we sat beneath the rowan-tree outby there, and when we thought we were to gang hand in hand through this wearisfu' world," and Mary began to sing in a low voice.

At this moment the door of the dwelling opened, and a tall, dark-complexioned woman entered, and saying, "My benison on a' here," she seated herself close to the fire, and lighting her pipe, began to smoke, to the great annoyance of Dame Seton.

"Gudewife," said she gruffly, "ye're spoiling the lassie's gown, and raising such a reek, so here's an awmous to ye, and you'll just gang your ways, we're unco thrang the day."

"Nae doubt," rejoined the spaewife, "a bridal time is a thrang time, but it should be a heartsome ane too."

"And hae ye the ill-manners to say it's otherwise?" retorted Dame Seton. "Gang awa wi' ye, without anither bidding; ye're making the lassie's braws as black as coom."

"Will ye hae yer fortune spaed, my bonny May?" said the woman, as she seized Mary's hand.

"Na, na," answered Mary, "I ken it but ower weel already."

"You'll be married soon, my bonny lassie," said the sibyl.

"Hech, sirs, that's piper's news, I trow," retorted the dame, with great contempt; "can ye no tell us something better worth the hearing?"

"Maybe I can," answered the spaewife. "What would you think if I were to tell you that your daughter keeps the half o' the gold ring she broke wi' the winsome sailor lad near her heart by night and by day?"

"Get out o' my house, ye tinkler!" cried Dame Seton, in wrath; "we want to hear nae such clavers."

"Ye wanted news," retorted the fortune-teller; "and I trow I'll gie ye mair than you'll like to hear. Hark ye, my bonnie lassie, ye'll be married soon, but no to Jamie Binks,—here's an anchor in the palm of your hand, as plain as a pikestaff."

"Awa wi' ye, ye leein' Egyptian that ye are," cried Dame Seton, "or I'll set the dog on you, and I'll promise ye he'll no leave a dud on your back to mend another."

"I wadna rede ye to middle wi' me, Dame Seton," said the fortune-teller. "And now, having said my say, and wishing ye a blithe bridal, I'll just be stepping awa;" and ere another word was spoken, the gipsy had crossed the threshold.

"I'll no marry Jamie Binks," cried Mary, wringing her hands; "send to him, mother, and tell him sae."

"The sorrow take the lassie," said Dame Seton; "would you make yoursel and your friends a wORLD wonder, and a' for the clavers o' a leelin' Egyptian,—black be her fa', that I should ban."

"Oh, mother, mother!" cried Mary, "how can I gie ae man my hand, when another has my heart?"

"Troth, lassie," replied her mother, "a living joe is better than a dead ane ony day. But whether Willie be dead or living, ye shall be Jamie Binks' wife the morn. Sae tak nae thought o' that ill-deedy body's words, but gang ben the house and dry your een, and Annot will put the last steek in your bonny white gown."

With a heavy heart Mary saw the

day arrive which was to seal her fate ; and while Dame Seton is bustling about, getting everything in order for the ceremony, which was to be performed in the house, we shall take the liberty of directing the attention of our readers to the outside passengers of a stage-coach, advancing from the south, and rapidly approaching Dunbar. Close behind the coachman was seated a middle-aged, substantial-looking farmer, with a round, fat, good-humoured face, and at his side was placed a handsome young sailor, whose frank and jovial manner, and stirring tale of shipwreck and captivity, had pleasantly beguiled the way.

"And what's taking you to Dunbar the day, Mr Johnstone?" asked the coachman.

"Just a wedding, John," answered the farmer. "My cousin, Jamie Binks, is to be married the night."

"He has been a wee ower lang about it," said the coachman.

"I'm thinking," replied the farmer, "it's no the puir lassie's fault that the wedding hasna been put off langer ; they say that bonny Mary has little guude will to her new joe."

"What Mary is that you are speaking about?" asked the sailor.

"Oh, just bonny Mary Seton that's to be married the night," answered the farmer.

"Whew!" cried the sailor, giving a long whistle.

"I doubt," said the farmer, "she'll be but a waefu' bride, for the sough gangs that she hasna forgotten an auld joe ; but ye see he was away, and no likely to come back, and Jamie Binks is weel to pass in the world, and the mother, they say, just made her life bitter till the puir lassie was driven to say she would take him. It is no right in the mother, but folks say she is a dour wife, and had aye an ee to the siller."

"Right!" exclaimed the young

sailor, "she deserves the cat - o' - nine tails!"

"Whisht, whisht, laddie," said the farmer. "Preserve us ! where is he gaun?" he continued, as the youth sprung from the coach and struck across the fields.

"He'll be taking the short cut to the town," answered the coachman, giving his horses the whip.

The coach whirled rapidly on, and the farmer was soon set down at Dame Seton's dwelling, where the whole of the bridal party was assembled, waiting the arrival of the minister.

"I wish the minister would come," said Dame Seton.

"We must open the window," answered Annot, "for Mary is like to swarf awa."

This was accordingly done, and as Mary sat close by the window, and gasping for breath, an unseen hand threw a small package into her lap.

"Dear sirs, Mary," said Dame Seton, "open up the bit parcel, bairn ; it will be a present frae your Uncle Sandie ; it's a queer way o' gieing it, but he ne'er does things like ony ither body." The bridal guests gathered round Mary as she slowly undid fold after fold. "Hech!" observed Dame Seton, "it maun be something very precious to be in such sma' bouk." The words were scarcely uttered when the half of a gold ring lay in Mary's hand.

"Where has this come frae?" exclaimed Mary, wringing her hands. "Has the dead risen to upbraid me?"

"No, Mary, but the living has come to claim you," cried the young sailor, as he vaulted through the open window, and caught her in his arms.

"Oh, Willie, Willie, where hae ye been a' this weary time?" exclaimed Mary, while the tears fell on her pale cheek.

"That's a tale for another day," answered the sailor; "I can think of nothing but joy while I haud you to

my breast, which you will never leave mair."

"There will be twa words to that bargain, my joe," retorted Dame Seton. "Let go my bairn, and gang awa wi' ye ; she's trysted to be this honest man's wife, and his wife she shall be."

"Na, na, mistress," said the bridegroom, "I hae nae broo o' wedding another man's joe : since Willie Fleming has her heart, he may e'en tak her hand for me."

"Gude save us," cried the farmer, shaking the young sailor by the hand, "little did I ken wha I was speaking

to on the top of the coach. I say, guidwife," he continued, "ye maun just let Willie tak her ; nae gude e'er yet come o' crossing true love."

"Deed, that's a truth," was answered by several bonny bridesmaids. Dame Seton, being deserted by her allies, and finding the stream running so strongly against her, at length gave an unwilling consent to the marriage of the lovers, which was celebrated amidst general rejoicings ; and at the request of his bride, Willie, on his wedding-day, attired himself in the clothes which the moths had so considerably spared for the happy occasion.

A PASSAGE OF MY LIFE.

MAIDEN aunts are very tough. Their very infirmities seem to bring about a new term of life. They are like old square towers—nobody knows when they were built, and nobody knows when they will tumble down. You may unroof them, unfloor them, knock in their casements, and break down their doors, till the four old black walls stand, and stand through storm and sunshine year after year, till the eye, accustomed to contemplate the gradual decay of everything else, sickens to look at this anomaly in nature. My aunt, dear good soul, seemed resolved never to die,—at least to outlive her hopeful nephew. I thought she was to prove as perdurable as a dried mummy,—she was by this time equally yellow and exsiccated as any of the daughters of Pharaoh.

I had run myself quite aground. But my extravagances, as well as my distresses, I had the policy to conceal from my aged relative. She, honest lady, occasionally had pressed me to accept of some slight pittances of two or three

£50's at different times, which, after much difficulty and entreaty, I made a merit of accepting, stoutly asserting that I only received them to avoid hurting her feelings—that my own income was amply sufficient for the limited wants of a scholar, or to any one who could put in practice the rules of wholesome economy ; but this trifle certainly would enable me to purchase a few rather expensive publications which I could not otherwise have hoped to do, and which would prove of essential use in furthering the progress of the two great works I had commenced while at college, and had been busy with ever since, viz. : "A History of Antediluvian Literature, Arts, and Sciences," and "A Dissertation on the Military Tactics of the Assyrians," which I intended should appear along with the last volume of Valpy's Greek Dictionary, or the first of Sir James Mackintosh's History of Great Britain.

Fortune at last grew tired of persecuting me ; she fairly turned her wheel, and put me on the brightest spoke. My aunt's factor called one day, and

let me know that he thought I should make my visits at Broadcroft more frequent—take a little interest in looking over the ditching and draining of the estate (short-sighted man, he little knew how much I had ditched and drained it by anticipation!)—walk through the woods and plantations, and bestow my opinion as to thinning them (they were long ago, in my own mind, transferred to the timber-yard)—apply myself a little to master the details of business connected with agricultural affairs, such as markets, green and white crops, manure, &c. &c. ; and concluded by telling me that his son was a remarkably clever lad, knew country matters exceedingly well, and would be a most valuable acquisition as factor or land grieve to any gentleman of extensive landed property. The drift of this communication I perfectly understood. I listened with the most profound attention, lamented my own ignorance of the subjects wherein his clever son was so much at home, and wished only that I had an estate, that I might entrust it to the care of so intelligent a steward. After dispatching a bottle or two of claret, we parted mutually pleased.

He had seen my aunt's will, and, in the fulness of his heart, ran over the legal jargon which constituted me the owner of Broadcroft, Lilliesacre, Kittleford, Westerha', Cozieholm, Harperston, and Oxbang, with hale parts and pendicles, woods and fishings, mills and mill - lands, muirs and mosses, rights of pasture and commony. I never heard more delightful music all my days than the hour I spent hearkening to this old rook cawing over the excellent lands that were mine in prospective. My aunt's letters, after this, I found assumed a querulous tone, and became strongly impregnated with religious commonplaces—a sure sign to me that she herself was now winding up her earthly affairs—and generally

concluded with some such sentence as this : “ I am in a comfortable frame of spirit, but my fleshly tabernacle is sorely decayed—great need hath it of a sure prop in the evening of its days.” These epistles I regularly answered, seasoning them with scriptural texts as well as I could. Some, to be sure, had no manner of connection or application whatsoever ; but I did not care for that if they were there. I stuck them thick and threefold, for I knew my aunt was an indulgent critic, provided she got plenty of matter. I took the precaution also of paying the postage, for I learned, with something like satisfaction, that of late she had become rather parsimonious in her habits. I also heard that she daily took much comfort in the soul-searching and faith-fortifying discourses of Mr Samuel Salmasius Sickerscreed, a migratory preacher of some denomination or other, who had found it convenient for some months to pitch his tent in the Broadcroft. Several of my aunt's letters told me, in no measured terms, her high opinion of his edifying gifts. With these opinions, as a matter of course, I warmly coincided. Sheet after sheet now poured in from Broadcroft. I verily thought all the worthy divines, from the Reformation downwards, had been put in requisition to batter me to pieces with choice and ghostly counsel.

This infliction I bore up against with wonderful fortitude, and repaid with my weightiest metal. To supply the extraordinary drafts thus made on my stores of devout phraseology, I had to call in my worthy friend Tom —. He had been a regularly-bred theologian, but finding the casque more fitting for his hot head than the presbyter's cowl, he now lived in elegant starvation as a dashing cornet in the — Dragoons, and a better fellow never breathed. His assistance was of eminent service : when we exhausted our own invention, we immediately transcribed the sermon of some forgotten divine of last century,

and sent it thundering off. These we denominated *shells*. At this time Tom's fortune and mine were hanging on the same pin ; we were both up to the chin in debt ; we had stretched our respective personal credits, as far as they would go, for each other. We were involved in such a beautiful multitude and labyrinth of mutual obligations, that we could neither count them nor see our way out of them. In the holy siege of Broadcroft citadel we therefore joined heart and hand.

In this manner things went on smoothly. My aunt was becoming daily weaker, seldom left her own bedroom, and permitted no person to see her save the Rev. S. S. Sickerscreed. Indeed, every letter I received from my aunt intimated more plainly than its predecessor that I might make up my mind for a great and sudden change, and prepare myself for afflictions. As in duty bound, my answers breathed of sorrow and resignation—lamented the mutability of this world—its nothingness—the utter vanity of all earthly joys. I really loved the good old lady ; but I was hampered most villainously. I knew not a spot where I could put the sole of my foot, without some legal mine blowing me up a shivered rag into the azure firmament,—a fate a thousand times more picturesque than pleasant. I may therefore be excused for confessing that I looked upon my aunt's release from this world as the dawn of my own deliverance. Yet, even then, I felt shame when I looked into the chambers of my heart, and found that every feeling of grief I had there for my aunt's illness was beautifully edged with a gleam of satisfaction. The cypresses and yews, and other mournful trees that threw their pensive shadows around me, were positively resting above a burning volcano of joy. No ; it was not in human nature for a desperate man like me to exclude from his contemplation the bills, bonds, moneys, and manors that had accumu-

lated for years under her thrifty and prudent management.

One morning, while musing in this indescribable state of feeling, a little ragged boy, besmeared with dust and sweat, whom I recognised as turnspit and running footman of the establishment at Broadcroft, thrust a crumpled greasy-like billet in my hand.

“ Come awa, laird, come awa, gin ye would like to see your auld auntie afore she gangs aff a' thegither.”

I started up, threw down the “ Sporting Magazine,” and instinctively snatched up my hat.

“ When did it happen, wee Jamie ? ”

“ This morning, nae far'er gane—but come awa ; everything's gaun tap-salteerie at Braidcraft—sae unexpected by us a' ! Has your horse been fed yet ? Dinn'a put aff, but come awa. We're a' dementit ower the way, and ye're muckle wanted, and sair missed.”

With this wee Jamie darted away ; I roared after him to obtain further particulars, but wee Jamie shot off like an arrow, only twisting his head over his shoulder, notwithstanding his trot, he screamed—

“ Gerss maunna grow under my heels, if I care for my lugs. But it's a' by noo. and there's nae gude in granin'.”

With which sapient remark the kitchen boy got out of hearing, and soon out of sight.

I now hastily broke the black wax of the billet. The note was subscribed by Mr S. S. Sickerscreed, and was written in his most formal small-text hand. He had been a schoolmaster in his youth, and could write legibly, which no gentleman who regards his *caste* should do. The three big S S S were dearer to me than a collar of knighthood. It required my immediate presence at Broadcroft to talk over certain serious and impressive matters. So had Mr Samuel Salmasius Sickerscreed penned his billet, and in the fulness of my heart I gave the poor man credit for

an excess of delicacy more than I ever noticed had belonged to him before. Poor dear man, he, too, has lost a valuable friend. Judging of the exquisiteness of my feelings by the agony of his own, he has kindly delayed the fatal announcement of my aunt's demise, till my heart has been prepared to meet the shock with becoming fortitude. How considerate—how very compassionate he has been! Worthy man—would I could repay his kindness with a benefice! Thus did I soliloquise over the dispatch from Broadcroft; but notwithstanding the tumult which it and its bearer raised in my bosom, I did not omit communicating to Tom the unexpected change which a few hours had produced in our destinies, and charging him at the same time to moderate his transports till I returned with a confirmation of our hopes.

Then backing my stoutest hunter, and taking a crow's flight across the country, I spared not her heaving flanks, nor drew bridle, till I reached the long, straight, dusky avenue that led to the tall, narrow slip of a house yclept Broadcroft Place. Here I slackened my pace, and left my wearied and panting brute to crawl as lazily as she liked along the avenue. I, too, lengthened my visage to the requisite degree necessary for the melancholy purpose on which I came. The very trees had a lugubrious and sepulchral aspect. I took them in fancy to be so many *Sawlies* waiting the time for heading the funeral procession of my lamented aunt. They seemed to mourn for her in sincere sorrow, and, in fact, walking under their shadows disposed my mind very much to melancholy. Now a green leaf, now a withered one, dropped on my beaver as I passed, and in the deep silence that reigned around me, I could not, despite my constitutional recklessness, be wholly insensible to the appeals these mute emblems of man's mortality made to reflection.

But a pleasanter train of feelings arose

when I looked at the stately trunks of the venerable oaks, their immense girth, and (with a glow of patriotic virtue, quite common now-a-days) pictured forth to myself how admirably they were suited to bear Britannia's thunders triumphantly across the wave. Yes, every tree of them shall be devoted to the service of my country. Perish the narrow thought, that for its own gratification would allow them to vegetate in unprofitable uselessness, when they can be so beneficially employed for the state. Every old, druidical-looking oak which my eye scanned was, of course, devoted to the axe. I already saw the timber yards piled with Broadcroft oak, and the distant sea my imagination soon whitened with a fleet of noble barks wholly built of them. Thus did I speculate till I reached the end of the avenue, where, to my surprise, I found a travelling post-chaise and four drawn up before the door of the mansion. This vehicle, an apparition of rare occurrence in so secluded a part of the country, and at the residence of so retired a lady as my departed aunt, was literally crushed with trunks, and boxes, and bags, and packages of one kind or another, strapped above, behind, and before it.

Being never unfertile in surmises, I immediately guessed that the equipage I saw must, of necessity, belong to the clerk to the signet, my aunt's city lawyer, who had trundled himself into the country with the whole muniments of my estate, for the mere purpose of welcoming me, and regulating my deceased relative's affairs. His prompt appearance, I attributed, with my usual goodness of heart, to the kindly foresight of Mr Samuel. I really did not know how I could sufficiently recompense him for the warm, disinterested, and valuable services he had rendered in this season of affliction. But my aunt must have remembered him in her testament. She was ever grateful.

She cannot possibly have overlooked him. As the d—l would have it, I then asked myself, now, if your aunt has forgotten Mr Samuel Salmasius Sickerscreed altogether, how will you act? At first, I said he must have £100 at least; then as I looked on my own necessities, the uncertainty of rents, the exorbitance of taxes, this sum speedily subsided into half the amount. And by the time I fairly reached my aunt's door, I found my mind reconciling itself to the handsome duty of presenting Mr Sickerscreed with a snuff-box, value £2, 10s., a mourning ring worth 30s., a new coat, and ten guineas; in all, some twenty pieces of gold or thereby.

On alighting, I gave my horse to the servant to walk and cool. John was old as his late mistress—a very good, foolish, gray-headed domestic, marvellously fond of the family he served with, and marvellously fond of conversation. He looked profoundly melancholy when he took my reins.

"It'll be a sair dispensation to you, Maister William," quoth John, "this morning's news. Ye wud be wonderfully struck and put about when ye heard it."

"It is, indeed," said I, throwing as much of mournfulness as possible into the tones of my voice. "Heavy news indeed, and most unexpected. Great cause have I to grieve. My poor dear aunt to be thus lost to me for ever!"

"Nae doubt, nae doubt, Maister William, ye maun hae a heavy heartfu'. We were a' jalousing as muckle,—that's me, Souple Rab, and wee Jamie; however, it'll no do to be coosten down a'thegither,—a rainy night may bring a blithe morrow. Every thing is uncertain in this world but death! But come on, Kate;" and John and my reeking jade disappeared in the direction towards the stable; John, no doubt, bursting with impatience till he could communicate to his select cabinet,

Souple Rab and wee Jamie, the awsome and doncie looks of the young laird.

I was yet lingering on the threshold in a most comfortable frame of mind, when the door was thrown open. Imagine my horror when the first figure I saw was my aunt herself, not in the drapery of the grave, but bedizened with ribbons from head to heel, and leaning her withered hand on the arm of the Reverend Mr Sickerscreed. I gasped for breath—my tongue swelled and clung to the roof of my mouth—my eyes literally started from their sockets as if they would leave their bony casements altogether. Had I not caught hold of the porch, down I should have dropped.

"Am I in my senses, aunt? Do I see you really alive? Is this no unreal mockery—no cruel hallucination? Resolve me, for Heaven's sake, else I go mad."

"Dear me, nephew," said the old lady, "what agitates you so? I feel so glad that you have paid me this visit ere I set off on my marriage jaunt with the elect of my heart, your worthy connection, Mr Sickerscreed."

"Marriage!" thundered I, "marriage!—I came to mourn over your bier, not to laugh at your bridal. O, the infernal cruelty, Mr What's-your-name, to despatch your pharisaical letter sealed with black wax."

"Young wrathful," meekly rejoined Mr Samuel, "it was dark green wax, most emblematic, as I said to your aunt, my dear spouse, of the unfading verdure of our harmonious affections."

"Black and green fiends dog you to Satan," roared I. "What an ass you have made of me! Farewell, a long farewell, to all my greatness. Oh! Broadcroft, Lilliesacre, Kittleford, Cozieholm, and Oxgang, perished in the clap of a hand, and for ever! The churchman's paw is upon you, and a poor fellow has no chance now of a single rood!"

With some more stuff of this kind, I parted with my venerable aunt and her smooth-tongued spouse. These petri-

factions of humanity had the charity, I suppose, to consider me moon-struck. I heard Mr Samuel sweetly observe, that verily the young lad's scholarship had driven him mad. I wished the rogue at the bottom of the Red Sea, or in the farthest bog of Connaught, paring turf and cultivating potatoes—anywhere but where I now saw him. I could have eaten him up raw and unsodden, without salt or pepper, where he stood—ground his bones to dust, or spit upon him till he was drowned in the flood of my spite. I did neither; but throwing myself again on the back of Kate, off I scampered home, more like a fury than a man.

In my way there was not a rascal I met but seemed to my heated imagination to know my misfortunes, and enjoy, with sly satisfaction, their fearful consummation. Two fellows I cut smartly across the cheek; they were standing coolly by the wayside, with their hands in their pockets, interchanging winks, and thrusting their tongues provokingly out like hounds on a hot day. They did not relish the taste of my thong, and one of them made an awkward squelsh into a ditch on receipt, head over heels, immensely to my heart's content.

It was evening when I reached the little village where my head-quarters for some weeks had been established. To add to my miseries, I found that Tom had, in my absence, with his usual volatility of temperament, been entertaining a numerous party in the Cross Keys, on the faith of my accession of property. When I rode past the tavern, my ears were assailed with most extraordinary sounds of festivity, and my head endangered by a shower of bottles and glasses that his reckless boon companions were discharging from the windows. Some of these windows, too, were illuminated with multitudes of *dips*—the extravagant dog!—three to the pound. And some coarse transparencies

were flaunting in my face pithy sentences, such as—"A Glorious Revolution," "Splendid Victory," "Jubilee to Hopeless Creditors," "Intelligence Extraordinary!" &c. Then, at every pause of the maddening din, the explosion of another bottle of champagne smote my ear like a death-knell. Cork after cork popped against the ceiling—crack, crack, they went like a running fire along a line of infantry, while loud above the storm rose the vociferations of my jolly friend, as he cheered them on to another bumper, with all the honours, or volunteered his own song. Poor Tom, he had only one song, which he wrote himself, and never failed to sing to the deafening of every one when he was drunk. It was never printed, and here you have as much of it as I remember, to vary the melancholy texture of my story:—

SONG.

FILL a can, let us drink,
For 'tis nonsense to think
Of the cares that may come with to-morrow;
And 'tis folly as big
As the Chancellor's wig,
To dash present joy with dull sorrow.
Hip! hip! hip! fill away;
Our life's but a day,
And 'twere pity that it proved a sad one;
'Twas in a merry pin
Our life did begin,
And we'll close it, brave boys, in a mad one!
Hip! hip! hip! &c.

Never shrink, boys, but stand,
With a can in each hand,
Like a king with his globe and his sceptre;
And though slack in your joints,
Yet thus armed at all points,
The devil himself can't you capture.
Hip! hip! hip! fill aright,
Should he seek us to-night,
We'll toss off the old rogue as a whetter;
When the hot cinder's down,
Take my oath on't, you'll own,
That good luck could not furnish a better.
Hip! hip! hip! &c.

Dull sophists may say,
Who have ne'er wet their clay,
That merry old wine gives no bliss,
But the flask's sparkling high,
Gives the dotards the lie,

Crying, kiss me, my roaring lads, kiss !
 Hip ! hip ! hip ! jolly boys !
 He who quarrels with those joys,
 Which the longer they're sipped of grows sweeter,
 May he live to be wise,
 And then when he sighs
 For a smack, let him choke with this metre.
 Hip ! hip ! hip ! &c.

This was followed with what Tom emphatically styled a grand crash of melody ; that is, overturning the table, and burying in one indiscriminate ruin, bowls, bottles, glasses, and all things brittle.

My heart sickened at the riot, and, broken in spirit and penniless, I retreated to my lodgings.

Here I had at least peace to ruminate over my prostrate fortunes ; but as meditation would not mend them, and next morning would assuredly bring the dire intelligence of my aunt's marriage, I, that same night, made a forced march, anxious to secure a convenient spot for

rustication and retirement, till fortune should again smile, or the ferocity of my creditors be somewhat tamed. Poor Tom ! I had the savage satisfaction of breaking up his carousal by a few cabalistic words written in a strong half-text hand : “Stole away ! Done up.—Fooled and finished.—Run, if you love freedom, and hate stone walls. You will find me earthed in the old hole.”

Next evening I was joined by my luckless shadow. He had a hard run for it ; the scent lay strong, and the pack were sure-nosed and keen as razors. But he threw them out from his superior knowledge of localities. After this we both became exceedingly recluse and philosophical in our habits. We had the world to begin anew, and we had each our own very particular reasons for not making a noise about it.—*Paisley Magazine.*

THE COURT CAVE:

A LEGENDARY TALE OF FIFESHIRE.

BY DRUMMOND BRUCE.

CHAPTER I.

A FEW years before the pride of Scotland had been prostrated by English bows and bills, on the disastrous day of Flodden, the holding of Balmeny, in the county of Fife, was possessed by Walter Colville, then considerably advanced in years. Walter Colville had acquired this small estate by the usual title to possession in the days in which he lived. When a mere stripling, he had followed the latest Earl of Douglas, when the banner of the bloody heart floated defiance to the Royal Stuart. But the wavering conduct of Earl James lost him at Abercorn the bravest of his

adherents, and Walter Colville did not disdain to follow the example of the Knight of Cadzow. He was rewarded with the hand of the heiress of Balmeny, then a ward of Colville of East Wemyss. That baron could not of course hesitate to bestow her on one who brought the king's command to that effect ; and in the brief wooing space of a summer day, Walter saw and loved the lands which were to reward his loyal valour, and wooed and wedded the maiden by law appended to the enjoyment of them. The marriage proved fruitful ; for six bold sons

sprung up in rapid succession around his table, and one "fair May" being added at a considerable interval after, Walter felt, so far as his iron nature could feel, the pure and holy joys of parental love, as his eye lighted on the stalwart frames and glowing aspects of his boys, and on the mild blue eyes and blooming features of the young Edith, who, like a fair pearl set in a carcanet of jaspers, received an added lustre from her singleness. But alas for the stability of human happiness! The truth of the deep-seated belief that the instrument of our prosperity shall also be that of our decay, was mournfully displayed in the house of Walter Colville. By the sword had he cut his way to the station and wealth he now enjoyed; by the sword was his habitation rendered desolate, and his gray hairs whitened even before their time. On the field of Flanckburn—once the scene of a more glorious combat—three of his sons paid with their lives for their adherence to the royal cause. Two more perished with Sir Andrew Wood, when Steven Bull was forced to strike to the "Floure and Yellow Carvell." The last, regardless of entreaties and commands, followed the fortunes of the "White Rose of York," when Perkin Warbeck, as history malignantly continues to style the last Plantagenet, carried his fair wife and luckless cause to Ireland; and there young Colville found an untimely fate and bloody grave near Dublin.

Thus bereft of so many goodly objects of his secret pride, the heart of Walter Colville naturally sought to compensate the losses which it had sustained in an increased exercise of affection towards his daughter. The beauties of infancy had now been succeeded by those of ripening maidenhood. The exuberant laugh, which had so often cheered his hours of care or toil, while she was yet a child, had given place to a smile still more endearing to his time-stricken

feelings; face and form had been matured into their most captivating proportions, and nothing remained of the blue-eyed, fair-haired child, that had once clung round his knee, save the artless openness of her disposition, and the unsullied purity of her heart. Yet, strange to tell, the very intensity of his affection was the source of bitter sorrow to her who was its object, and his misdirected desire to secure her happiness, threatened to blench, with the paleness of secret sorrow, the cheek it was his dearest wish to deck with an ever-during smile of happiness.

Edith Colville was but an infant when her three brothers fell at Sauchie, and had scarcely completed her eighteenth year, when the death of her youngest brother made her at once the object of her father's undivided regard, and of pursuit to many who saw and were smitten with charms in the heiress of Balmeny, which had failed to attract their attention while her brother yet stood between the maiden and that heritage. But the heart they now deemed worth the winning was no longer hers to give. The death of her mother while she was yet a child, had left her her own mistress long before the period when maternal care is most essential; and Edith's love was sought and won by one who had little but youth and a warm heart to recommend him.

Arthur Winton was the orphan son of a small proprietor in the neighbourhood, who, having been deprived of the best part of his property by what he conceived the injustice of King James III., and the rapacity of his favourite Cochrane, was easily induced to join the insurgent nobles who wrought the destruction of that monarch. He was, however, disappointed in his expectations of personal reward, having fallen in the conflict; and his son was too young to vindicate his claim in an age so rude as that of which we write.

Walter Colville, whose family had

been so sadly thinned in the battle we have mentioned, though they had fought on the other side, naturally bore no goodwill to the boy ; but his younger son, who was nearly of the same age, viewed him with different feelings. He was much about the house of Balmeny ; and, to be brief, he won the affections of the young Edith long before she knew either their nature or their value. Until the departure of young Walter Colville, Arthur's visits were attributed by the old man to his friendship for his son, but when Edith had unhappily become his heiress, he at once attributed them to their proper cause. A stern prohibition of their repetition was the consequence, and the lovers were henceforth reduced to hurried and sorrowful meetings in secret.

On the morning wherein we have chosen to begin the following veritable narrative, the youthful pair had met unobserved, as they imagined, in a shady corner of Balmeny wood, and had begun, the one to lament, and the other to listen, when the sudden apparition of the angry father checked the pleasing current of their imaginings.

He drew his sword as he approached, but the recollection of his seventy years, and his now enfeebled arm, crossing his mind, he replaced the useless weapon, and contented himself with demanding how the youth had dared thus clandestinely to meet his daughter.

Arthur attempted to allay his anger, and to plead his passion as he best could ; but the grim and angry frown that sat on Walter Colville's brow, as he listened to him, soon showed how vainly he was speaking, and he ceased in confusion.

" Have you finished, young master ? " said Colville, with a sneer. " Then listen : you are not the wooer I look for to Edith. I should prefer him something richer, something wiser, and something truer to the king, than any son of your father is likely ever to prove ; so

set your heart at rest on that matter. And you giglot, sooth ! to your rock and your chisart. But stay ; before you go, tell this gallant gay to prowl no longer about my dwelling. By St Bride, an he does, he may chance to meet a fox's fate ! "

" Dear father," said the weeping girl, " upbraid us not. Never will I disobey you, never be his, without your own consent."

" Hold there," replied Colville, smiling grimly, " I ask no more." And he led away the maiden, who dared not so much as steal a parting look.

Arthur Winton bore this fiat of the old man, and the dutiful acquiescence of his daughter (though he doubtless thought the latter pushed to the very extreme of filial obedience), if not with equanimity, at least with so much of it as enabled him to leave the presence of his mistress and her father with something like composure. He wandered slowly to the beach, which lay at no great distance, as if he had hoped to inhale with the cool breeze that floated from off the waters, some portion of the calmness in which they then lay bound, his mind occupied in turning over ill-assorted plans for the future, ever broken in upon by some intruding recollection of the past. The place where he now walked was one well calculated, according to the creed of those who believe in the power exercised over the mind by the face of external nature, to instil soothing and tranquillizing feelings. It was a smooth grassy lawn, forming the bottom of a gentle eminence, undulating and stretching downwards to the pebbly beach, among whose round white stones the quiet waters of the Firth fell kissingly. The view was bounded to the north by the rising eminences we have mentioned, and shut in on the west by the woody promontory which is still crowned by Wemyss Castle. To the eastward several rocky eminences stretch into the Firth, the more distant still in-

creasing their seaward march until the bay is closed by the distant point of Kin-craig. Before him lay the silver Firth, and, half-veiled in distance, the green fields and hills of Lothian, terminated by the picturesque Law of North Berwick, and the great Bass, frowning like some vast leviathan awakening from his sleep. One or two white-sailed barks lay motionless upon the water. The effect of the whole was so stilling and sedative, that Arthur, half forgetting his recent disappointment, stretched himself upon the sward, and abandoned himself to contemplation.

While he lay thus chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy, the sounds of distant song and merriment occasionally broke upon his ear. He at first regarded them as the mere offspring of imagination, but at length the choral swell of a seemingly joyous ballad, followed by a hearty, far-reverberated shout, convinced him that the merry-making was real, and at no great distance. He started to his feet in some alarm, for his first impression was that the Good Neighbours were holding their revels near him, and he well knew the danger of being detected as a prying overlooker of their mystic merriment. A moment served to dissipate this fear. The voices which he had listened to were too rough and boisterous ever to be mistaken for the singing of those tiny minstrels, whose loudest notes never exceeded in sound the trumpet of the bee. There was no fairy ring round the spot on which he had lain, nor was the hour either the "eye of day" or that of midnight, at which, as is well known, the elfin power was most formidable. After looking and listening for some time, he ascertained that the sounds proceeded from a cave, which we have not yet mentioned, but which forms a striking ornament to the beach, and an object of considerable interest to the geologist, having been doubtless formed long before the Forth had found its present

modest limits. Being anxious to dispel the feelings that now preyed on his peace, by a diversion of whatever kind, he walked towards the place. As he approached, the mirth was renewed with increased vehemence, and he perceived, at the western entrance of the cave, a female, from whose swarthy hue and singular habiliments he at once divined the nature of its present inmates. The woman, whose features were stern and somewhat repulsive, wore a long gown, of some coarse dark-coloured material, which fell almost to her feet, having short wide sleeves, which left the arms at perfect liberty, and coming up to the neck, was there fastened with a golden brooch. Her head-dress consisted of a red and yellow coloured shawl, twisted fantastically into a conical shape. Pendants of gold hung from her ears, and rings of the same metal, in many of which were set rubies and other sparkling gems, garnished her tawny fingers. Arthur at once recognised an Egyptian or gipsy in the dark-featured damsel who stood before him, and hesitated a moment whether he should pursue the determination of mixing with the revellers within, to which his eager desire of escaping from his present unhappy feelings had prompted him. The Egyptians were in those days of a much darker character than the remnants of their descendants, which, in spite of press-gangs and justice-warrants, still linger amongst us. Murder among themselves was a thing of everyday occurrence, and desperate robberies, committed upon the king's lieges, by no means rare. The present gang, from their vociferation, seemed in a state of excitement likely to remove any little restraints which the fear of the law's vengeance might at another time have imposed on them, and the features of the woman, contrary to their custom, wore no look of invitation, but rather seemed to deepen into a warning frown the nearer he approached the door at which she was

posted. On the other hand, the honour of the race, to such as trusted them, was proverbial. His curiosity to know more intimately the manners of a people so remarkable as the Egyptians then were, and still are—perhaps a latent wish of being able to extract from their prophetic powers some favourable auspice to his almost expiring hopes—or that nameless something which at times impels us to court the danger we at other times shun with care—all conspired to induce him to enter the cave, and he accordingly attempted to do so. In this, however, he was opposed by the gipsy, who, stepping exactly in his way, waved her arm in a repelling attitude; and, seeing him disinclined to obey this silent injunction, coming still closer to him, whispered, “Get you gone; your life will be endangered if you enter here.”

Before Arthur could reply to this injunction, she who gave it was suddenly attacked by a man, who, issuing from the entrance, struck her a smart blow across the shoulders with a staff which he carried, and then, with a scowling look and angry accent, spoke a few words to her in a language which Arthur understood not. She muttered something in reply, and proceeded towards the beach. “The woman is mad at times, young sir,” said the man, now addressing Arthur. “Heed her not, I beseech you. We are only a few wandering puir folks, making merry, and if you wish to share our revelry, enter, and welcome. Some of our women may be able to read your weird, should you so incline; you have nothing to fear.”

Arthur was by no means satisfied either that the woman was mad, or that the man meant him fairly; but as he could not now retreat without betraying his fear to the dark searching eye which the gipsy bent on him, and was besides conscious that he possessed a well-proved sword, and considerable skill

and strength in the handling of it, he signified his wish to join the merrymaking, and followed the gipsy into the cave.

On entering he found himself in the interior of a high-roofed cavern, of considerable extent, partly exposed to the seaward side by two arched openings between the lofty recesses of rock which support the roof, that towards the east being the smaller and lower of the two; and the other rising in height nearly to the roof, affording a view of the Firth, and admitting light to the place.

The inhabitants of the cave had ranged themselves along the north and inner side. Nearest the western entrance, stretched on sacks, sheepskins, cloaks, and other nondescript articles of clothing, sat, or rather lay, ten or twelve men, with rather more than double that number of women, all busily engaged in drinking; farther off, some ragged crones were busily superintending the operation of a wood fire on a suspended pot; while, farther off still, a few barebacked asses, and a plentiful variety of worse clad children, were enjoying their common straw.

Arthur was immediately introduced to the company of carousers, some of whom received him with a shout of welcome, but others with evident dissatisfaction; and he overheard, as he seated himself, what seemed an angry expostulation and reply pass between his conductor and one of the party. This individual, who was evidently the chief of the gang, was an aged man, with a beard of silver gray, which, as he sat, descended to his lap, entirely covering his breast. His head was quite bald, with the exception of a few hairs that still struggled for existence behind his ears, and this, added to the snowy whiteness of his eyebrows, and the deep wrinkles in his brow and cheeks, would have conferred an air of reverence on his countenance, had not the sinister expression of his small and

fiery-looking eyes destroyed the charm. On each side of him sat a young girl—the prettiest of the company; and the familiar manner in which they occasionally lolled on the old man's bosom, and fondled with his neck and beard, showed the intimate terms on which they lived with him. The rest of the men were of various ages, and though all of them were marked with that mixed expression of daring recklessness and extreme cunning which has long been “the badge of all their tribe,” they attracted (with one exception) little of Arthur's attention. Of the women, the very young ones were extremely pretty, the middle-aged and old ones, more than equally ugly. Young and old, pretty and ill-favoured, all were alike deficient in that retiring modesty of expression without which no face can be accounted truly lovely, and the want of which darkens into hideousness the plainness of homely features. They joined freely in the draughts, which their male companions were making from the horns, which, filled with wine and ale, circulated among the company, and laughed as loud and joked as boldly as they did.

Arthur seated himself in silence, and, somewhat neglectful of the kindness of the female who sat next him, occupied himself in surveying the motley group before him. His eye soon rested on a man seated next the damsels who occupied the place immediately to the left of the chief, and the moment he did he became anxious and interested. The individual was a man of rather more than middle height, of a muscular, though by no means brawny frame. His countenance was ruddy, and of a pleasant mirthful expression; his eyes were full, of a dark hazel colour; his nose, though prominent, gracefully formed, and his mouth small and piquant. His beard was of a dark auburn hue, and he wore moustaches of the same colour. He was dressed in a

hodden-gray doublet and hose, which were fastened round his body by a strong leathern girdle, from which hung a broad sword of the two-edged shape. The manner of this individual was evidently different from those of his present companions, and that from the very pains which he took to assimilate it. There was all their mirth without their grossness, and his kind, affable demeanour to the female part of the company differed widely from the blunt and sometimes brutal behaviour of his comrades.

“Who is that on the left of the old man?” whispered Arthur to the man who had introduced him.

“That—that's his favourite dell,” replied the man.

“Nay, I mean not the woman—the man upon her left.”

“Why, I know not—he's none of us—strayed in like you to share the revelry, I fancy,—though, if he takes not better care of his eyes and hands, an inch or two of cold iron will pay his reckoning. I think he dallies too much with the mort.”

The cool, even tone in which this annunciation of probable murder was uttered, rendered the communication more startling to Arthur than if it had been made with a vindictive exclamation or suppressed groan; and he looked anxiously and steadily on the stranger, whose gallant bearing more and more attracted him. The latter had observed him more than once bending his eyes on him, and was not apparently pleased with the strictness of his scrutiny. Twice, when their eyes met, the stranger had checked a rising frown by emptying the horn which he held in his hand; the third time he set it down untasted, and, fixing on Arthur a look of calm commanding dignity, which seemed more native to him than aught around, exclaimed, in a deep and powerful accent,—

“Friend, wherefore peer you so

steadily this way? If you have aught to say, out with it—if not, reserve your ogling for some of the fair eyes near you."

Arthur felt abashed beneath the rebuke which his solicitude for this individual had exposed him to, and he could only mutter in reply something about the young damsel beside him.

"Ah! ah!" replied the stranger, resuming his good humour, "it is to her your looks were sent? Soul of Bruce! but she is well worthy of your wonder. Never—and I have seen many bright eyes—have I lighted on a pair so witching." Then, turning to the object of these praises, he took her hand, and whispered in her ear something, which, though inaudible to those present, was evidently of no unpleasing nature, as her dimpling cheek unquestionably testified.

The patriarch had viewed, for some time, with ill-dissembled anger, the approaches of the stranger to the temporary sovereign of his affections. But whether he thought them becoming too close, or was enraged at the placidity with which they were received, his indignation now burst out, and as is usual in matters of violence, the weight of his vengeance fell heaviest on the weaker individual. He smote the girl violently on the cheek, and, addressing the stranger in a voice hoarse with passion, poured forth a torrent of words which were to Arthur utterly unintelligible.

The stranger, who did not seem to understand the expressions of this address, could not, however, mistake its meaning. The language of passion is universal—and the flashing eye and shrivelled brow of the Egyptian chief were too unequivocal to be misunderstood. He remained silent but a moment, and then, drawing from his bosom a purse, apparently well-filled, he took out a golden Jacobus, and proffered it to the patriarch, as a peace-offering to his awakened anger. The

fire of indignation fled from the old man's eyes as they lighted on the gold, but they were instantaneously lighted up by a fiercer and more deadly meaning. Arthur could observe significant looks circulating among the men, who also began to speak to one another in a jargon unintelligible to him. He felt convinced that the purse which the incautious stranger had produced had determined them to destroy him; and, prepossessed with this idea, he saw at once the necessity of the keenest observation, and of the danger which attended his scrutiny being detected. He pretended to begin to feel the influence of the potations in which he had indulged, and apparently occupied himself in toying with the willing dell who sat beside him. He now perceived one or two of the men rise, and proceed to the several openings of the cave, evidently to see that no one approached from without, or perhaps to cut off retreat. He saw, too, that they plied the stranger and himself with wine and ale; and, more convincing than all, he perceived on the darkening brow and gleaming eye of the hoary Egyptian, the awakening excitement of a murderous design. The stranger, in the meantime, apparently unconscious of the peril he was in, began again to bandy kind words and looks with the favourite of the chief. The old man looked grimly on, but did not now seem to wish to interrupt the dalliance. Suddenly he drew his hand from his bosom. It was filled with a dagger, which he raised high, evidently with the intention of slaying the unguarded stranger, who was too much occupied with the eyes and hands of the beauty to perceive his villainous intention.

Arthur, who at the moment was lifting to his mouth the ponderous pewter "stoup," or flagon, containing the ale on which the Egyptians were regaling, saw the wretch's intent, and on the impulse of the moment flung the vessel at

the lifted hand. His aim was fortunately true ; the villain's arm fell powerless by his side, while the dagger flew to a considerable distance. Arthur then rose, and crying hastily to the stranger to defend himself, drew his blade and made towards him.

The stranger had perceived the intended blow, though, entangled as he at the moment was, he would unquestionably have fallen a victim to it. He now leaped hastily up, and exclaiming loudly, "*Morte de ma vie!—Treason!*" drew out his sword, and looked for the foe. Arthur now joined him, and, setting their backs to the rocky wall of the cave, they prepared to defend themselves against the enraged gipsies, who, now shouting wildly, drew from under their cloaks long sharp knives, which they brandished furiously in their faces.

The stranger swept his sword around him in a manner that proved him a practised master, and Arthur manfully seconding him, the Egyptians were kept completely at bay, for none seemed daring enough to trust himself within the sweep of the stranger's sword, or that of his new companion. But it was only while they could keep their backs to the rocky wall that they could hope to cope with their savage enemies, who, though they did not come near enough to stab, surrounded them as nearly as they could, and yelled and shouted like so many disappointed fiends. There was apparently no means of escape, though there might be of resistance, as the moment they quitted the wall their backs would have been exposed to the daggers of the infuriated assassins. Arthur perceived, too, to his dismay, that sure means were taken to render their length of sword unavailing. Several women were clambering up the rock behind them carrying large blankets and other cloths, clearly for the purpose of throwing over their swords and themselves, and thus yielding them up a fettered prey to these ruffians. All

hope of escape died in his bosom as he discovered the well-laid design, and he was about to rush on the savages, and at least sell his life dearly, when he observed the women who carried the blankets pause and look upwards. He too looked up, and saw, with a consternation that for a moment unmanned him, an immense fragment of loose rock in the very act of being removed from its im-memorial resting-place, and precipitated on their heads.

"Holy Virgin ! help us, or we are lost !" exclaimed the youth ; and the prayer had hardly left his lips ere the threatened engine of their destruction was converted into the means of their immediate escape. The ponderous stone dropped so far directly on its fatal errand, that Arthur instinctively crouched beneath the apparently inevitable blow ; but encountering a few feet only above his head a projecting piece of rock, it rebounded from the side of the cave in a slanting direction, and, falling clear of its intended victims, smote to the earth the hoary head of the patriarch. He fell beneath the huge fragment, which hid from their sight the face and neck of the Egyptian ; but the convulsive writhings of the unhappy man, which for a moment contorted his frame, only to leave it in utter stillness, told plainly that his long career had ceased, and that the man of blood had become the victim of his own pitiless design.

The Egyptians, panic-struck by this sudden death-blow, set up a loud and stunning wail, as they crowded round the body of their chief ; but the stranger and Arthur stayed not to observe their farther demeanour, and, taking advantage of the opening among their enemies, which was now afforded them, sprang out of the cave, and ascended at the top of their speed to the brow of the eminence behind it.

They continued their rapid walk for some time in silence, induced, no doubt, by the tumultuous nature of their feel-

ings, and the violence of their present exertion. At length, having entered a few yards into a wood, which then decorated the place, though soon after to be converted into keel and timbers for the "Great Michael," the stranger halted, and, taking Arthur by the hand, said breathlessly,—

"By Saint Andrew, young sir, you have done us this day good service. I never thought to have been so indebted to a pint-stoup, trow me."

"But what sorrow tempted you, man," replied Arthur, rather crossly, "to play the fool with the old villain's dearie in yon wild sort of fashion; and, above all, what induced you to flourish your well-filled purse in the eyes of those who love gold better than anything else save blood?"

"Whim—chance—*fate*—I thought at one time. It is long since cunning men have told me that I shall die for a woman, and, by the Bruce's soul! I thought the hour had come. As for my Jacobuses, I rejoice I saved them from the filching crew, as they will serve for an earnest—a poor one, to be sure—of my thankfulness to my brave deliverer;" and so saying, he drew from his bosom the purse which had excited the fatal cupidity of the Egyptians, and gracefully proffered it to the youth.

Arthur had all along suspected—nay, felt assured—that his companion was of a rank superior to his appearance; and, had it not been so, his present conduct would have convinced him.

"Whoever you are, sir," said he, "that in this lowly guise speak the language and the sentiments of a noble-born, your own heart will, I know, convince you that I dare not accept your gold. The service I rendered you I would have rendered to the poorest carle in Fife, but were it ten times greater than it was, it must not be repaid with coin."

"All are not carles who wear hoddens gray and blue bonnets with you, I find," replied the stranger, smiling approvingly. But come, if gold cannot repay the service you have done me, tell me what can."

"Nothing in your power to perform," replied Arthur, calmly.

"Try," continued the stranger; "I bear with me a talisman which can command all objects which men in general desire. Choose, then—wealth, worship, or a fair wife!"

There was something so frank, open, yet condescending, in the tone and appearance of this extraordinary stranger, that Arthur could not resist their fascinating influence, and although he could not imagine that any interference on the part of his new friend would produce the slightest change in the stern sentence of Walter Colville, he communicated to him a general outline of his present situation.

The stranger listened attentively to the detail—then demanded how far distant the dwelling of Colville was; and, on being informed of its near vicinity to the spot on which they then stood, declared his intention of immediately proceeding thither and using his influence in Arthur's behalf.

The latter opposed this resolution but faintly; for, though he was, as we have said, utterly at a loss to conceive how his cause was to be benefited by the proffered kindness of the stranger, yet a vague and almost latent hope of still obtaining Edith never entirely forsook him.

He conducted the stranger through the wood, therefore, by the path which led most directly to the house of Balmeny. On reaching the skirt of the forest, it was agreed that the former should proceed alone to the dwelling of Colville, and that Arthur should remain where he was, and await the result.

CHAPTER II.

THE stranger set out on his voluntary mission at a rapid pace, and soon arrived at the house. The door stood open, and he entered with the careless sauntering air of one entirely indifferent as to the welcome he might be greeted with. He found Colville seated apparently in no very pleasant humour, and his daughter, bustling about among the servant-maidens, wearing on her flushed cheek and suffused eye undoubted symptoms of the sorrow with which the morning's adventure had afflicted her.

"Give you good-e'en, gudeman of Balmeny," said the stranger, seating himself, without waiting an invitation, on the bench opposite Colville.

"The same to you, neebour," said the landlord, in a tone that had little of welcome in it.

A few moments' silence now ensued, Colville evidently waiting with some impatience for the tidings which the other seemed in no haste to communicate to him. But this could not last.

"Have you anything to tell, ask, or deliver, friend?" at last said Colville.

"This bright-e'ed maiden is the bonny lass of Balmeny, I'm thinking," was the unreplying answer.

"That is my daughter, truly," said the landlord, becoming more and more impatient; "does your coming concern her?"

"That it does," replied the stranger. "There's an auld byeword, that 'foul fish and fair daughters are nae keeping ware.' This fair May is the object of my visit; in short, gudeman, I come awooing."

At the sound of this magnetic word, a universal commotion arose in the dwelling of Colville. The maiden, who was its object, surveyed the stranger with indignation and surprise; the servants whispered and tittered among each

other; and Colville seemed for a moment about to give vent to the feelings of his anger, when the current of his feelings suddenly changed, and, directing a look of malicious joy to his daughter, he addressed the stranger—

"Welcome, wooer—welcome. Come, lasses, set meat and drink before this gentle here; as the auld Earl of Douglas said, 'It's ill arguing between a fu' man and a fasting'."

The order was obeyed with great readiness by the serving maidens, who set before the stranger the household bread and cheese, and a bicker of no scanty dimensions, containing the reaming ale for which Scotland has been so long famous. There was a malicious merriment twinkling from every eye as the scene went on; for all knew well that the over-strained kindness of the host was soon to be converted into outrageous and overwhelming abuse of the guest. The stranger, however, seemed either not to notice or to slight these indications. He partook heartily of the good cheer set before him, and amused himself by returning with good-humoured smiles the stolen looks of the simpering maidens. He looked in vain, however, for Edith, who had retired from the place.

"And now," said Colville, who began to think the stranger somewhat more at ease than he could have wished, "Your name, wooer?"

"My name?" said the stranger, somewhat embarrassed.

"Ay, your name—all men have a name. *Knaves* [laying an emphasis on the word] many."

"True, gudeman, true. My name, then, is Stuart—James Stuart. I hope it pleases you?"

"The name is the best in the land," said the old man, touching his bonnet. As to the wearer—he!—'a Stuarts

are no sib to the king', ye ken. What countryman are you?"

"I was born at Stirling," said the stranger.

"Ay, ay, it may be, it may be," replied Walter Colville; "but, to bring the matter to a point, what lands and living hae ye, friend?"

"Sometimes less, sometimes more," replied the stranger, "as I happen to be in the giving or the taking humour. At the lowest ebb, however, I think they are at least worth all that ever called a Colville master."

"Faith, and that's a bauld word, neebour," cried Colville, bitterly—"and one that, I'm jalousing, you'll find it difficult to make gude."

"At your own time it shall be proved, gudeman; but it is not for myself I come to woo the bonny lass of Balmeny. I am, thanks to a wise old man who sits in Windsor, wived already."

"And who, in Beelzebub's name, may you be blackfit for?" demanded Colville, rising in wrath.

"Give your daughter to the youth I shall name, and I will, on her wedding-day, fill you up one lippie with the red gold, and five running o'er with silver."

"Give her! To whom?"

"To one who loves her dearly; and, what is more, is dearly loved in return, old man."

"Who is he?" reiterated Colville.

"One who is worthy already of the hand of the best ae daughter of any laird in Fife; and who, ere to-morrow's sun sets, will be wealthier than yourself."

"Who—who—who is he?" cried the old man, stamping in a paroxysm of rage.

"Arthur Winton!" said the stranger.

The anger of Colville, when this unpleasing name was uttered, almost overwhelmed him.

"Out of my doors, you rascally impostor," at length he was able to exclaim; "out of my doors! Swith away

to the minion who sent you here, an you would wish not to taste the discipline of the whip, or to escape being worried by the tykes."

To the stranger, the anger of the old man, instead of fear, seemed only to occasion merriment. He laughed so heartily at the violence into which the rage of his host seduced him, that the tears actually stood in his eyes—conduct that naturally increased the passion which it fed on. The servants stood looking on in silent wonder; and Edith, startled by the noise of the discordant sounds, returned to the place in wonder and alarm.

An unexpected termination was suddenly put to the scene by the entrance of Arthur Winton. His cheek was flushed with haste; and he was so breathless that he could hardly exclaim,—

"Save yourself, sir stranger, by instant flight; the Egyptians have tracked our path hither, and are pursuing us here with numbers ten times exceeding those we encountered in the cave."

"Let them come," said the stranger, with a smile; "Egyptians though they be, they cannot eat through stone walls or oaken doors. We will carouse within while they howl without, and drink the *dirige* of their chief."

Arthur said nothing, but looked doubtfully at Colville.

"And do you really imagine, worthy youth, and no less worthy blackfit, that I am to have my house sieged, my cattle stolen, and my corn carried off, to shield you from the consequences of your drunken brawls? Not I, by the cat of the blessed Bride. Out of my doors, ye caitiffs,—they can but slay you, and the whittle has crossed the craig of mony a better fellow than any of ye twosome is likely to prove. Begone, I say."

"Nay, my dear father," said Edith, imploringly, "do not drive them forth now; the Egyptians are approaching the house—they cannot escape."

"And they shall not stay here," re-

plied the old man, harshly, the tone of agony in which Edith's entreaties were uttered recalling all the bitterness of his feelings against Arthur.

"At least, Walter Colville," said Arthur, "save this stranger. He cannot have offended you. It was on my errand he came hither. I will go forth alone. Perhaps one victim may suffice."

"Nay, brave youth," said the stranger, "we go together. Farewell, old man. You are a Scot, and yet have betrayed your guest. You are a Colville, and the first of the line that ever turned his back upon a Stuart at his utmost need."

The tone and sentiment of these words had a powerful effect on Walter Colville. A momentary confusion rested on his countenance, and then, with a smile ill put on, he said,—

"Come, come, sirs; I but joked wi' ye. Did you really think that Walter Colville would abandon to his enemy any who have bitten his bannock, and kissed his cup as you have done? Na, na; here you are safe while the auld wa's stand. Sit down. I'll go above and look out for the landloupers."

The old man left the place accordingly, and Arthur, seizing the opportunity, retired to one corner with Edith, where the nature of their conversation could be only guessed from the animated looks and gestures of the affectionate pair.

The stranger in the meantime strode up and down the place, regardless of the affrighted servants, singing to himself—

"O whaur will I get a bonny boy,
That will win hose and shoon;
That will rin to Lord Barnard's yett,
And bid his ladye come?"

"What say you, my little man?" he continued, addressing a boy of twelve or thirteen years, who sat before the fire, sharing, with a shaggy collie, the

contents of an ample cog, altogether unheeding the agitation which reigned around him; "will you run to Wemyss Castle with a message to Sir David?"

"I' the noo!" said the boy, looking up with an air expressive of the sense of the unparalleled oppression proposed in interrupting him during the sacred ceremony of supper.

The stranger laughed, and drawing from his bosom the purse we have so often spoken of, he displayed a Jacobus, and offered it to the boy. "Na, I'll no gang for the yellow bawbee," said the urchin; "but if ye'll gie me the braw whittle, I'll rin." The stranger immediately put into his hand the dagger he coveted, and drawing him aside, conveyed to him in whispers the message he was to deliver.

Walter Colville now re-entered, and informed them that he had reconnoitred the Egyptians, who, including women and children, seemed to amount to above a hundred.

"Could I but get this younker beyond their clutches," said the stranger, "a short half hour would disperse them like the leaves in autumn."

Colville stared at this avowal, but was silent. The conviction of Arthur, that the speaker was not what he seemed, now seized on his mind also, but it appeared to inspire him with no pleasant feeling; on the contrary, anxiety deepened on his countenance the more and more he gazed on the handsome features of his guest, and the wild shouts of the Egyptians, which he had previously heard with comparative indifference, now evidently inspired him with the deepest terror.

It was agreed at length that the boy should make the attempt. To get him out of the house, without endangering the inmates, was comparatively easy, as the Egyptians as yet stood at some distance from the door. Once out, they had only his own ready wit and speed of foot to trust to. While Colville

and Arthur therefore undid with due caution the massive bars and bolts which protected the oaken door, the stranger, anxious to witness the success of his messenger, ascended to the upper storey, and stood at the open casement. He was immediately observed by the Egyptians, who set up a yell of savage impatience at the sight, the men brandishing their weapons, and the women waving their arms, as if threatening vengeance against him.

Their attention was now, however, directed from him to the youthful messenger, who approached towards them undauntedly. They went forward to meet him.

"The master sent me to see what ye're a' here for," said the boy.

"Tell him," said one of the Egyptians harshly, "we are come to demand the two strangers who have just entered his dwelling. Let him give them to our vengeance, and we will depart peaceably—not a feather or a rag of his shall be scathed by us."

"And what if he shouldna just agree to this?" said the boy, edging towards the west, covering the manœuvre, as if retiring towards the house.

"If he refuse us, woe unto him. We will leave him neither corn nor cattle, kith nor kin; burn his house with fire, and his own red blood shall lapper on his cold hearth-stone."

"Haith, carle, you maun tell him that yourself," said the boy, as with one wild bound he sprung from the group, and, with the speed of a grayhound, made for the wood.

There was a cry of disappointment burst forth from the Egyptians as they perceived his intention, and many set out in pursuit. The chase was viewed with deep interest by the inmates of the house—for Colville, Edith, and Arthur Winton had now joined the stranger. The wood was not far distant; the boy was famous for his swiftness of foot; and they could see that his pursuers

were falling fast behind. To their dismay, however, they perceived at length that there was a powerful dog among the number, who continued the chase after all his human competitors had abandoned it in despair. He gained fast upon the boy. "He is lost!" said Edith, piteously; "that villainous dog will tear him to pieces." But the event belied the maiden's fear. Just as the ferocious animal seemed about to seize him, the boy was seen to turn upon his pursuer. The dog gave a loud howl, and fell to the ground, and the stranger could perceive his own dagger gleaming in the stripling's hand, as he waved it in triumph o'er his head ere he disappeared among the trees.

"I could stake an earldom," said the stranger exultingly, "on that boy's proving a noble soldier! By the soul of Bruce, he can both fight and flee."

Colville's terror, as he listened to these words, fairly mastered the composure which he had hitherto affected. He took off his bonnet, and bending lowly to the stranger, said in a tremulous voice—

"In Heaven's name, say, oh! say, sir, you are not the king!"

"Even so, good Walter, James of Scotland stands before you. Are you sorry to see me? By Saint Andrew, I had hoped I should be welcome to every honest house,—ay, and every honest heart, in my dominions."

Walter had dropped on his knee as the truth, which he had for some time suspected, was confirmed to him, and, looking up to his royal guest, while tears stood in his eyes—"Welcome, my noble prince; what is it of Walter Colville's, from the bode in his purse to the last drop of his heart's blood, that the king's not welcome to? I and mine, my liege, have fought, and bled, and died for the royal house. But to see your grace here in peril, surrounded by so many villains, and this old arm alone left to assist you! Oh! for the

six braw fellows that I have seen prancing on yonder lea,—they would have cleared a way for your highness through them all !”

“ Never fear for me, Walter Colville ; I am not doomed to fall by a brawl of this kind, or in mine own land ;—so runs the rede.”

The king now turned round, and perceived Arthur and Edith, who had retired to a little distance. When they saw they were observed, they advanced and would have kneeled ; but the prince prevented this. He took them both by the hand, and imprinted on the lips of Edith a kiss, savouring as much of warm affection as of kingly courtesy.

Their attention was now directed to the operations of the Egyptians. They perceived, with some surprise, that a considerable number of them left the rest, and made for the wood, and that those who remained ceased the yelling manifestations of sorrow and revenge which had so affrighted Edith.

“ They are meditating a retreat, methinks,” said the king.

“ I fear, my liege,” said Colville, “ they are rather planning some mode of successful assault ; ” and the return of the Egyptians too soon verified the apprehension. They bore with them the trunk of a fallen tree, and the besieged at once saw the use for which this powerful engine was intended.

“ My door can never withstand the shock of a ram like this,” cried Walter ; “ they will force a passage, and out and alas ! your highness will be murdered—murdered in the house of Balmeny ! ”

James was proverbially brave, but it cannot be denied that he looked a little grave as he perceived the ponderous engine borne along, which in all probability would, in a few minutes, lay open the passage to a band of miscreants thirsting for his blood, and against whose rage the bravery of himself and his friends seemed a poor defence.

“ Let the worst come to the worst,”

said he at length, “ we three will make good this staircase for a stricken hour at least ; before then the rescue must arrive.”

The king, Colville, and Arthur now sought the floor below ; Edith, with the serving-maidens, being stationed above, to be, in case of the Egyptians forcing an entry, still within the defence of the stair.

The door was of massive oak, studded with iron nails, and supported by three iron bolts of considerable thickness. An additional defence was now added in the shape of planks placed diagonally under these bolts, and for a few moments the besieged imagined it might withstand the efforts of the assailants. But a few strokes of the tree soon showed the fallacy of this hope. The door shook under the first blow, and ere a score had been given, the yielding hinges showed that the Egyptians had well calculated the force of their instrument.

“ It must be cold steel that saves us after all,” said the king, retreating to the staircase.

“ Oh, that I and all my kin were stark dead on this floor, and your highness safe on Falkland green ! ” exclaimed Colville, wringing his wrinkled hands, and following.

They had scarcely gained their intended position at the upper landing of the staircase, when, yielding to a desperate stroke, the door flew open, and the infuriated Egyptians, shouting, made their way to the interior. Not finding those they sought below, they next proceeded to ascend the stair. This, however, was an ascent fatal to all who attempted it. Corpse after corpse fell backward among the enraged ruffians under the blows of the king and Arthur, until no one could be found daring enough to attempt the passage.

“ Let us sweep them in their hive,” at length cried a hoarse voice, “ and so let them either roast or come forth.”

A shout of approbation followed this

advice, and, while a chosen few remained to guard the stair, the remainder roamed about the house collecting together everything which could assist their diabolical design.

The king's heart, and that of his brave companions, sunk as they heard this resistless plan of destruction proposed and set about. It was for a moment only, however, for suddenly they heard the clear sweet voice of Edith exclaiming, "We are saved, we are saved! yonder comes the Lord of Wemyss and his gallant followers!" and immediately after the maiden herself appeared to reiterate the tidings.

"Are you sure of what you say, Edith?" asked the king eagerly. "How do the horsemen ride?"

"As if their coursers were winged," replied Edith, "all of them; but one who backs a gray steed of surpassing power, is far before the rest, and ever and anon turns round, as if upbraidingly, to his followers."

"My trusty David!" exclaimed the king, with emotion, "well wert thou worthy of the gallant gray!"

There was now heard a peculiar shout from among the Egyptians without, which was rightly interpreted as a signal of retreat; for it was immediately followed by the evacuation of the house; and so speedy and simultaneous was their flight, that the king could only perceive the latest of the tribe as they made for the wood, leaving to Wemyss and his companions a deserted field and an open entrance.

"Thanks, David, for this timely rescue," said the king, as the knight bended the knee before him. "By my crown, the spurs were well bestowed on one who can so fairly use them!"

James, followed by Sir David, Walter, Arthur, and the rest, now led the way to the upper chamber where the immoderate joy and hospitality of the old man displayed itself in the most substantial form. When they had

caroused for some time, the king, turning to Colville, said,—

"Mine host, did I hear rightly when you said there was nothing beneath this roof-tree to which I was not welcome?"

"Your highness heard rightly."

"Give me then this fair maiden. We kings, you know, seldom choose the least valuable of our subjects' chattels."

"Your grace may command me," said Colville, though somewhat hesitatingly, for he saw the turn which things were taking.

"And you too, sweet Edith?" said the king, again saluting the blushing girl; and then, without waiting for an answer, continued, "that you may all know, my lieges, that we accept your benevolences merely for your own benefits, I give away this treasure, tempting as it is, to one who has well deserved the favour at our hand. Take her, Arthur, and confess that I have found a way to repay the debt I owed you. Receive his hand, fair maiden, and if it will add anything to its value in your eyes, know that it has this day saved a king's life."

The old man's sentiments in regard to Arthur Winton had been undergoing a change imperceptible even to himself, from the moment he had perceived him the companion and probable favourite of the king; but the revolution was completed when he was made acquainted with the particulars of his interference in the royal behalf,—a merit which in his eyes would have outweighed a thousand faults in his intended son-in-law.

King James shortly afterwards left the house of Balmeny amid the blessings of its inmates; and to close our tale, we have only to add, that the gift of the monarch was shortly after confirmed at the altar, where Edith became the happy bride of Arthur Winton; and that the royal gratitude flowed freely on the wedded pair, as any who chooses to pursue the time-worn records of the Great Seal may satisfy himself.

HELEN WATERS:

A TRADITIONARY TALE OF THE ORKNEYS.

BY JOHN MALCOLM.

The lost, the castaway on desert isles,
Or rocks of ocean, where no human aid
Can reach them more.

THE mountains of Hoy, the highest of the Orkney Islands, rise abruptly out of the ocean to an elevation of fifteen hundred feet, and terminate on one side in a cliff, sheer and stupendous, as if the mountain had been cut down through the middle, and the severed portion of it buried in the sea. Immediately on the landward side of this precipice lies a soft green valley, embosomed among huge black cliffs, where the sound of the human voice, or the report of a gun, is reverberated among the rocks, where it gradually dies away into faint and fainter echoes.

The hills are intersected by deep and dreary glens, where the hum of the world is never heard, and the only voices of life are the bleat of the lamb and the shriek of the eagle;—even the sounds of inanimate nature are of the most doleful kind. The breeze wafts not on its wings the whisper of the woodland; for there are no trees in the island, and the roar of the torrent-stream and the sea's eternal moan for everadden these solitudes of the world.

The ascent of the mountains is in some parts almost perpendicular, and in all exceedingly steep; but the admirer of nature in her grandest and most striking aspects will be amply compensated for his toil, upon reaching their summits, by the magnificent prospect which they afford. Towards the north and east, the vast expanse of ocean, and the islands, with their dark heath-clad hills, their green vales, and gigantic cliffs, expand below as far as the eye can reach. The view towards the south is

bounded by the lofty mountains of Scarabin and Morven, and by the wild hills of Strathnaver and Cape Wrath, stretching towards the west. In the direction of the latter, and far away in mid-ocean, may be seen, during clear weather, a barren rock, called Sule Skerry, which superstition in former days had peopled with mermaids and monsters of the deep. This solitary spot had been long known to the Orcadians as the haunt of seafowl and seals, and was the scene of their frequent shooting excursions, though such perilous adventures have been long since abandoned. It is associated in my mind with a wild tale, which I have heard in my youth, though I am uncertain whether or not the circumstances which it narrates are yet in the memory of living men.

On the opposite side of the mountainous island of which I speak, and divided from it by a frith of several miles in breadth, lie the flat serpentine shores of the principal island or mainland, where, upon a gentle slope, at a short distance from the sea-beach, may still be traced the site of a cottage, once the dwelling of a humble couple of the name of Waters, belonging to that class of small proprietors which forms the connecting link betwixt the gentry and the peasantry.

Their only child Helen, at the time to which my narrative refers, was just budding into womanhood; and though uninitiated into what would now be considered the indispensable requisites of female education, was yet not alto-

gether unaccomplished for the simple times in which she lived ; and, though a child of nature, had a grace beyond the reach of art, untaught and unteachable. There was a softness and delicacy in her whole demeanour, never looked for and seldom found in the humble sphere of life to which she belonged. Yet her beauty did not startle or surprise, but stole over the heart almost insensibly, like the gentle fall of the summer evenings of her own native isles, and, like that, produced in the beholder an emotion almost allied to sadness.

Such a being was not likely to be appreciated by the rude and commonplace minds by whom she was surrounded, and with whom a rosy cheek and a laughing eye constitute the *beau-ideal* of woman ; but she awakened a world of romance in one young heart, with which her own gentle bosom shared the feelings she inspired.

Henry Graham, the lover of Helen Waters, was the son of a small proprietor in the neighbourhood ; and being of the same humble rank with herself, and, though not rich, removed from poverty, their views were undisturbed by the dotage of avarice or the fears of want, and the smiles of approving friends seemed to await their approaching union.

The days of courtship were drawing towards a close, and the period of their marriage was at last condescended upon by the bride. Among the middling and lower classes of society in the Orkneys, it is customary for the bridegroom to invite the wedding-guests in person ; for which purpose, a few days previous to the marriage, young Graham, accompanied by his friend, took a boat and proceeded to the island of Hoy, to request the attendance of a family residing there ; which done, on the following day they joined a party of young men upon a shooting excursion to Rackwick, a village romantically

situated on the opposite side of the island. They left the house of their friends on a bright, calm, autumnal morning, and began to traverse the wild and savage glens which intersect the hills, where their progress might be guessed at by the reports of their guns, which gradually became faint and fainter among the mountains, and at last died away altogether in the distance.

That night and the following day passed, and they did not return to the house of their friends ; but the weather being extremely fine, it was supposed they had extended their excursion to the opposite coast of Caithness, or to some of the neighbouring islands, so that their absence created no alarm whatever.

The same conjectures also quieted the anxieties of the bride, until the morning previous to that of the marriage, when her alarm could no longer be suppressed. A boat was manned in all haste, and dispatched to Hoy in quest of them, but did not return during that day nor the succeeding night.

The morning of the wedding-day dawned at last, bright and beautiful, but still no intelligence arrived of the bridegroom and his party ; and the hope which lingered to the last, that they would still make their appearance in time, had prevented the invitations from being postponed, so that the marriage party began to assemble about mid-day.

While the friends were all in amazement, and the bride in a most pitiable state, a boat was seen crossing from Hoy, and hope once more began to revive ; but, upon landing her passengers, they turned out to be the members of the family invited from that island, whose surprise at finding how matters stood was equal to that of the other friends.

Meantime all parties united in their endeavours to cheer the poor bride ; for which purpose it was agreed that the

company should remain, and that the festivities should go on,—an arrangement to which the guests the more willingly consented, from a lingering hope that the absentees would still make their appearance, and partly with a view to divert in some measure the intense and painful attention of the bride from the untoward circumstance ; while she, on the other hand, from feelings of hospitality, exerted herself, though with a heavy heart, to make her guests as comfortable as possible ; and, by the very endeavour to put on an appearance of tranquillity, acquired so much of the reality as to prevent her from sinking altogether under the weight of her fears.

Meantime the day advanced, the festivities went on, and the glass began to circulate so freely, that the absence of the principal actor of the scene was so far forgotten, that at length the music struck up, and dancing commenced with all the animation which that exercise inspires among the natives of Scotland.

Things were going on in this way, when, towards night, and during one of the pauses of the dance, a loud rap was heard at the door, and a gleam of hope was seen to lighten every face, when there entered, not the bridegroom and his party, but a wandering lunatic, named Annie Fae, well known and not a little feared in all that country-side. Her garments were little else than a collection of fantastic and party-coloured rags, bound close around her waist with a girdle of straw, and her head had no other covering than the dark tangled locks that hung, snake-like, over her wild and weather-beaten face, from which peered forth her small, deep-sunk eyes, gleaming with the baleful light of insanity.

Before the surprise and dismay excited by her sudden and unwelcome appearance had subsided, she addressed the company in the following wild and incoherent manner :—

“ Hech, sirs, but here’s a merry meeting indeed,—a fine company, by my faith ; plenty o’ guude meat and drink here, and nae expense spared ! Aweel, it’s no a’ lost neither ; this blithe bridal will mak a braw burial, and the same feast will do for baith. But what’s the folk a’ glowering at ? I’se warrant now ye’re cursing Annie Fae for spoiling your sport. But ye ken I maun just say my say, and that being done, I’ll no detain you langer, but jog on my journey ; only I wad just hint, that, for decency’s sake, ye suld stop that fine fiddling and dancing ; for ye may weel believe that thae kind o’ things gie nae great pleasure to the dead ! ”

Having thus delivered herself, she made a low curtsey, and brushed out of the house, leaving the company in that state of painful excitement which, in such circumstances, even the ravings of a poor deranged wanderer could not fail to produce.

In this state we, too, will leave them for the present, and proceed with the party who set off on the preceding day in search of the bridegroom and his friends. The latter were traced to Rackwick ; but there no intelligence could be gained, except that, some days previous, a boat, having on board several sportsmen, had been seen putting off from the shore, and sailing away in the direction of Sule Skerry.

The weather continuing fine, the searching party hired a large boat, and proceeded to that remote and solitary rock, upon which, as they neared it, they could discover nothing, except swarms of seals, which immediately began to flounder towards the water-edge. Upon landing, a large flock of sea-fowl arose from the centre of the rock with a deafening scream ; and upon approaching the spot, they beheld, with dumb amazement and horror, the dead bodies of the party of whom they had come in search, but so mangled and

disfigured by the seals and sea-fowl, that they could barely be recognised.

It appeared that these unfortunates, upon landing, had forgot their guns in the boat, which had slipt from her fastenings, and left them upon the rock, where they had at last perished of cold and hunger.

Fancy can but feebly conceive, and still less can words describe, the feelings with which the lost men must have beheld their bark drifting away over the face of the waters, and found themselves abandoned in the vast solitude of the ocean. Their sensations must have resembled his who wakens in the grave from a death-like trance, to find himself buried alive !

With what agony must they have gazed upon the distant sails, gliding away over the deep, but keeping far aloof from the rock of desolation, and have heard the shrieks which they sent over the flood, in the vain hope of their reaching some distant ship, mocked by the doleful scream of the sea-fowl ! How must their horrors have been aggravated by the far-off view of their native hills, lifting their lonely peaks above the wave, and awaking the dreadful consciousness that they were

still within the grasp of humanity, yet no arm stretched forth to save them ; while the sun was riding high in the heavens, and the sea basking in his beams below, and nature looking with reckless smiles upon their dying agonies !

As soon as the stupor of horror and amazement had subsided, the party placed the dead bodies in their boat, and, crowding all sail, stood for the Orkneys. They landed at night upon the beach, immediately below the house where the wedding guests were assembled ; and there, while they were debating in what manner to proceed, were overheard by the insane wanderer, the result of whose visit has already been described.

She had scarcely left the house, when a low sound of voices was heard approaching. An exclamation of joy broke from the bride. She rushed out of the house with outstretched arms to embrace her lover, and the next moment, with a fearful shriek, fell upon his corpse ! With that shriek reason and memory passed away for ever. She was carried to bed delirious, and died towards morning. The bridal was changed into a burial, and Helen Waters and her lover slept in the same grave !

LEGEND OF THE LARGE MOUTH.

BY ROBERT CHAMBERS, LL.D.

“Here’s a large mouth indeed !”

SHAKSPEARE—*King John.*

ARRIVING one evening at an inn in Glasgow, I was shown into a room which already contained a promiscuous assemblage of travellers. Amongst these gentlemen—*commercial* gentlemen chiefly—there was one whose features struck me as being the most ill-favoured

I had ever beheld. He was a large, pursy old man, with a forehead “villanous low,” hair like bell-ropes, eyes the smallest and most porkish of all possible eyes, and a nose which showed no more prominence in a side-view than that of the moon, as exhibited in her

first quarter upon a freemason's apron. All these monstrosities were, however, as beauties, as absolute perfections, compared with the mouth—the enormous mouth, which, grinning beneath, formed a sort of rustic basement to the whole superstructure of his facial horrors. This mouth—if mouth it could be called, which bore so little resemblance to the mouths of mankind in general—turned full upon me as I entered, and happening at the moment to be employed in a yawn, actually seemed as if it would have willingly received me into its prodigious crater, and consigned me to the fate of Empedocles, without so much as a shoe being left to tell the tale.

The company of a traveller's room is generally very stiff, every man sitting by his own table in his own corner, with his back turned upon the rest. It was not so, however, on the present occasion. The most of the present company seemed to have been so long together in the hotel as to have become very gracious with each other; while any recent comers, finding themselves plumped into a society already thawed and commingled, had naturally entered into the spirit of the rest. Soon discovering how matters stood, I joined in the conversation, and speedily found that the man with the large mouth was one of the most polite and agreeable of mankind. He was one of those old, experienced gentlemen of the road, who know everything that is necessary to be known, and are never at a loss about anything. His jokes, his anecdotes, his remarks, were all excellent, and kept the rest bound, as it were, in a chain. The best of him was, that he seemed quite at ease on the subject of his mouth.

No doubt he was conscious of his preternatural ugliness—for whatever may be said about the blinding effect of self-love, and so forth, I hold that the most of people know pretty nearly how they stand as to personal attractions;

but he had none of that boggling, unsteady, uncomplacent deportment, so remarkable in the generality of ill-looking people. On the contrary, there was an air of perfect self-satisfaction about him, which told that he either was so familiar with the dreadful fact as to mind it not, or that he was a thorough man of the world, above considering so trivial a particular, or that he was rich, and could afford to be detested. It was curious, however, that even while he almost convulsed the rest with his jokes, he never laughed in the least himself. He evidently dared not; the guffaw of such a man must have produced consequences not to be calmly contemplated. Part, indeed, of the humorous effect of his conversation arose from the cautious way in which he managed his mouth. A small aperture at one side, bearing the same proportion to the whole that the wicket of a carriage-gate does to the whole gate itself, served for the emission of his words. Anything else would have been a mere waste of lip.

On my ordering refreshment, I was informed by the company, that in consideration of this being the anniversary of a distinguished historical event, they had agreed to sup together in a rather more formal way than usual, and that they would be happy if I would join them. Having assented to the proposal, I began to reflect with some anxiety upon the probable conduct of the Mouth at table. How so extraordinary a feature would behave, what it would ask for, after what manner it would masticate, and, above all, how much it would devour, were to me subjects of the most interesting speculation. The wicket won't do there (thought I to myself), or I'm much mistaken. Yet again,—so ran my thoughts,—many large men have been known to eat very little, while your true devourers are found to be lean, shrivelled creatures, who do not seem to be ever the better

of it. "A large mouth," says the Scottish proverb, "has always a good luck for its meat." That may be, thought I, and yet the large mouth may be quite indifferent to what it is so sure of getting. All kinds of ideas connected with this subject ran through my mind; but in the end I found it all a riddle. The Mouth might prove either glutinous or abstemious, without exciting more surprise by the one event than by the other.

By-and-by some one asked a waiter if supper was nearly ready, and on an answer in the affirmative being given, I observed the Mouth suddenly bustle up, and assume an air of eager promptitude that almost seemed to decide the question. The man rose, and, going to a corner of the room where his great-coat was hanging, brought forth a small package, which he proceeded to untie at a side-table. The only article it contained was a spoon, which he immediately brought forward and laid upon the table, accompanying the action with an air that might have befitted a surgeon in arranging his instruments for an operation. I had no longer any doubt as to the gastronomical character of the Mouth, for here was an article that might have served in the nursery of Glumdalclitch. It was an antique silver implement, with a short handle, and a rim about four inches in diameter, like an ordinary saucer. Observing the curiosity of the company to be strongly excited, the old man showed it round with good-natured politeness, telling us that he had been so long accustomed at home to the use of this goodly article, that he could now hardly discuss either soup or dessert without it, and therefore made a point of carrying it along with him in his travels.

"But, indeed, gentlemen," said he, "why should I make this a matter of delicacy with you? The truth is, the spoon has a history, and my mouth—none of the least, you see—has also a

history. If you feel any curiosity upon these points, I will give you a biographical account of the one, and an auto-biographical account of the other, to amuse you till supper is ready."

To this frank proposal we all cordially agreed, and the old man, sitting down with the spoon in his hand, commenced a narrative which I shall here give in the third person.

His mouth was the chieftain and representative of a long ancestral line of illustrious and most extensive mouths, which had flourished for centuries at a place called Tullibody. According to tradition, the mouth came into the family by marriage. An ancestor of the speaker wooed, and was about to wed, a lady of great personal attractions, but no fortune, when his father interfered, and induced him, by the threat of disinheritation on the one hand, and the temptation of great wealth on the other, to marry another dame, the heiress of a large fortune and large mouth, both bequeathed to her by her grandfather, one of the celebrated "kail-suppers of Fife." When his resolution was communicated to the toothless lady, she was naturally very much enraged, and wished that the mouth of her rival might descend, in all its latitude, to the latest generation of her faithless swain's posterity; after which she took her bed—and married another lover, her *second-best*, next week, by way of revenge.

The country people, who pay great attention to the sayings of ladies condemned to wear the willow, waited anxiously for the fulfilment of her malediction, and accordingly shook their heads and had their own thoughts, when the kail-supper's descendant brought forth a son whose mouth, even in his swaddling-clothes, reflected back credit on her own. The triumph of the ill-wisher was considered complete, when the second, the third, and all the other children, were found to be distinguished

by this feature ; and what gave the triumph still more poignancy was, that the daughters were found to be no more exempted than the sons from the family doom. In the second generation, moreover, instead of being softened or diluted away, the mouth rather increased, and so it had done in every successive generation since that time. The race having been very prolific, it was now spread so much that there was scarcely a face in Tullibody or the neighbourhood altogether free of the contagion ; so that the person addressing us, who had his permanent residence there, could look round him upon several hundreds of kindred mouths, with all the patriarchal feelings of the chief of a large Highland clan.

If there had been any disposition in the family to treat their fate ill-humouredly, it would have been neutralised by the luck which evidently accompanied the introduction and transmission of this singular feature. So far, however, from entertaining any grudge or regret upon the subject, it had been the habit of the family to treat it as a capital joke, and to be always the first to laugh at it themselves. So much was this the case, that a wealthy representative of the family, about a century ago, founded, not an hospital or a school, but a *spoon*, which should be handed down from mouth to mouth as a practical and traditional jest upon the family feature, and, though not entailed, be regarded, he hoped, as a thing never to be parted with for any consideration, unless fate should capriciously contract the mouths of his descendants to such a degree as to render its use inconvenient. This elegant symbol, after passing through the hands of a long train of persons, who had each been more able than another to use it effectively, came at length into the possession of the individual now addressing us—a person evidently qualified to do full justice to the intentions of his ancestor.

It was, therefore, with the apprehension of something awful, that after the conclusion of the story, and the introduction of supper, I took a place at the well-spread board. In sitting down, I cast a look at the Mouth. It was hovering, like a prodigious rainbow, over the horizon of the table, uncertain where to pitch itself. There was an air of terrible resolution about it, which made me almost tremble for what was to ensue. It was evident that we were to have “a scene.”

The Mouth—for so it might be termed *par excellence*—was preferred by acclamation to the head of the table,—a distinction awarded, as I afterwards understood, not so much on account of its superior greatness, as in consideration of its seniority, though I am sure it deserved the *pas* on both accounts. The inferior and junior mouths all sat down at different distances from the great Mouth, like satellites round a mighty planet. It uttered a short, gentleman-like grace, and then began to ask its neighbours what they would have. Some asked for one thing, some for another, and in a short time all were served except itself. For its own part it complained of weak appetite, and expressed a fear that it should not be able to take anything at all. I could scarcely credit the declaration. It added, in a singularly prim tone of voice, that, for its part, it admired the taste of Beau Tibbs in Goldsmith—“Something nice, and a little will do. I hate your immense loads of meat ; that’s country all over.” Hereupon, I plucked up courage, and ventured to look at it again. It was still terrible, though placid. Its expression was that of a fresh and strong warrior, who hesitates a moment to consider into what part of a thick battle he shall plunge himself, or what foes he shall select as worthy of particular attack. Its look belied its word ; but again I was thrown back by its words belying

its look. It said to a neighbour of mine, that it thought it might perhaps manage the half of the tail of one of the herrings at his elbow, if he would be so kind as carve. Was there ever such a puzzling mouth! I was obliged again to give credit to words; yet again was I disappointed. My neighbour thinking it absurd to mince such a matter as a "Glasgow magistrate," handed up a whole one to the chairman. The Mouth received it with a torrent of refusals and remonstrances, in the midst of which it began to eat, and I heard it continue to mumble forth expostulations, in a fainter and fainter tone, at the intervals of bites, for a few seconds; till, behold, the whole corporate substance of the burghal dignitary had melted away to a long meagre skeleton! When done, its remonstrances changed into a wonder how it should have got through so plump a fish; it was perfectly astonishing; it had never eaten a whole herring in its life before; it was an unaccountable miracle.

I did not hear the latter sentences of its wonderments; but, towards the conclusion, heard the word "fowl" distinctly pronounced. The fowls lying to my hand, I found myself under the necessity of entering into conference with it, though I felt a mortal disinclination to look it in the mouth, lest I should betray some symptom of emotion inconsistent with good manners. Drawing down my features into a resolute pucker, and mentally vowing I would speak to it though it should blast me, I cast my eyes slowly and cautiously towards it, and made inquiry as to its choice of bits. In return for my interrogation, I received a polite convulsion, intended for a smile, and a request, out of which I only caught the important words, "breast" and "wing." I made haste to execute the order; and, on handing away the desired viands, received from the mouth another grate-

ful convulsion, and then, to my great relief, all was over!

Well, thought I, at this juncture, a herring and a fragment of fowl are no such great matters; perhaps the Mouth will prove quite a natural mouth after all. In brief space, however, the chairman's plate was announced as again empty; and I heard it receive, discuss, and answer various proposals of replenishment made to it by its more immediate neighbours. I thought I should escape; but no—the fowl was really so good that it thought it would trouble me for another breast, if I would be so kind, &c. I was of course obliged to look at it again, in order to receive its request in proper form; when neglecting this time my former preparations of face, I had nearly committed myself by looking it full in the mouth with my eyes wide open, and without having screwed my facial muscles into their former resolute astringency. However, instantly apprehending the amount of its demands, my glance at the Mouth fortunately required to be only momentary, and I found immediate relief from all danger in the ensuing business of carving. Yet even that glance was in itself a dreadful trial—it sufficed to inform me that the Mouth was now more terrible than before—that there was a fearful vivacity about it, a promptitude, an alacrity, and energy, which it did not formerly exhibit. Should this increase, thought I, it will soon be truly dreadful. I handed up a whole fowl to it, in a sort of desperation. It made no remonstrances, as in the case of the herring, at the abundance of my offering. So far from that, it seemed to forgive my disobedience with the utmost goodwill; received the fowl, dispatched it with silence and celerity, and then began to look abroad for further prey. Indeed, it now began to crack jokes upon itself—a sportive species of suicide. It spoke of the spoon; lamented that, after all,

there should be no soups at table whereon it might have exhibited itself; and finally vowed that it would visit the deficiencies of the supper upon the dessert, even unto the third and fourth dish of *blancmange*.

The proprietor of the mouth then laid down the spoon upon the table, there to lie in readiness till such time as he should find knives and forks of no farther service—as the Scottish soldiery in former times used to lay their shields upon the ground while making use of their spears. I now gave up all hopes of the Mouth observing any propriety in its future transactions. Having finished my own supper, I resolved to set myself down to observe all its sayings and doings. Its placidity was now gone—its air of self-possession lost. New powers seemed to be every moment developing themselves throughout its vast form—new and more terrible powers. It was beginning to have a *wild look*! It was evident that it was now *fleshed*—that its naturally savage disposition, formerly dormant for want of excitement, was now rising tumultuously within it—that it would soon perform such deeds as would scare us all!

It had engaged itself, before I commenced my observations, upon a *roast* gigot of mutton, which happened to lie near it. This it soon nearly finished. It then cast a look of fearful omen at a piece of cold beef, which lay immediately beyond, and which, being placed within reach by some kind neighbour, it immediately commenced to, with as much fierceness as it had just exemplified in the case of the mutton. The beef also was soon laid waste, and another look of extermination was forthwith cast at a broken pigeon-pie, which lay still farther off. Hereupon the eye had scarcely alighted, when the man nearest it, with laudable promptitude, handed it upwards. Scarcely was it laid on the altar of destruction, when it disappeared too, and a fourth, and a fifth,

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and a sixth look, were successively cast at other dishes, which the different members of the party as promptly sent away, and which the Mouth as promptly dispatched.

By this time all the rest of the party were lying upon their oars, observing with leisurely astonishment the progress of the surviving, and, as it appeared to them, endless feeder. He went on, rejoicing in his strength, unheeding their idleness and wonder, his very soul apparently engrossed in the grand business of devouring. They seemed to enter into a sort of tacit compact, or agreement, to indulge and facilitate him in his progress, by making themselves, as it were, his servitors. Whatever dish he looked at, therefore, over the wide expanse of the table, immediately disappeared from its place. One after another, they trooped off towards the head of the table, like the successive brigades which Wellington dispatched, at Waterloo, against a particular field of French artillery; and still, dish after dish, like said brigades, came successively away, broken, diminished, annihilated. Fish, flesh, and fowl disappeared at the glance of that awful eye, as the Roman fleet withered and vanished before the grand burning-glass of Archimedes. The end of all things seemed at hand. The Mouth was arrived at a perfect transport of voracity! It seemed no more capable of restraining itself than some great engine, full of tremendous machinery, which cannot stop of itself. It had no self-will. It was an unaccountable being. It was a separate creature, independent of the soul. It was not a human thing at all. It was everything that was superhuman—everything that was immense—inconceivably enormous! All objects seemed reeling and toppling on towards it, like the foam-bells upon a mighty current, floating silently on towards the orifice of some prodigious sea-cave. It was like the whirlpool of

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Maelstrom, everything that comes within the vortex of which, for miles around, is sure of being caught, inextricably involved, whirled round and round and round, and then down that monstrous gulph—that mouth of the mighty ocean,

the lips of which are overwhelming waves, whose teeth are prodigious rocks, and whose belly is the great abyss !

Here I grew dizzy, fainted, and—I never saw the Mouth again.

RICHARD SINCLAIR;

OR, THE POOR PRODIGAL IN THE AISLE.

BY THOMAS AIRD.

CHAPTER I.

WITH many noble qualities—firmness, piety, integrity, and a thorough affection for his family—the father of the poor prodigal, Richard Sinclair, had many of the hard points of the Scottish character ; a want of liberality in his estimate of others, particularly of their religious qualities ; a jealousy about his family prerogative, when it was needless to assert it ; and a liking for discipline, or, as he styled it, nurture, without tact to modify its applications. Towards his eldest son—a shy and affectionate youth—his behaviour, indeed, seemed distinctly opposite to what we may characterise as its usual expression—overbearing gravity. Without this son's advice, he never ventured on any speculation that seemed doubtful. He was softly amenable to the mild wisdom of the lad, and paid it a quiet deference, of which, indeed, he sometimes appeared to be ashamed, as a degree of weakness in himself. But the youth had never disobeyed his parents' will in any one particular ; he was grave and gentle ; and his father, who had been brought up amidst a large and rugged family, and was thus accustomed to rather stormy usages, was now at a loss, in matters of rebuke, how to meet this new species of warfare,

which lay in mild and quiet habits, and eventually became afraid of the censure which was felt in the affectionate silence of his eldest son.

This superiority might have offended old Sinclair's self-love ; but the youth, as already stated, made ample amends, by paying in his turn a scrupulous and entire deference to his parent, whom he thus virtually controlled, as a good wife knows to rule her husband, by not seeming to rule at all. From this subdued tone of his favourite prerogative in the father before us there was a reaction—something like a compensation to the parental authority—which began to press too hard upon his second son Richard, who, being of a bolder character than his brother, was less scrupulously dealt with ; besides that the foward temperament of this younger boy frequently offended against what his father honestly deemed propriety and good rule.

He lost no opportunity, when Richard had done anything in the slightest degree wrong, of checking him with disproportioned censure, and of reminding him of what he owed to his parents ; and this was repeated, till bearing blame in the boy became a substitute for gratitude—till the sense of obliga-

tion, instead of being a special call to love, was distinctly felt to be an intolerable burden. From all these circumstances there naturally grew up a shyness betwixt father and son, which was unintentionally aggravated by Richard's mother, who, aware of her husband's severe temper, tried to qualify it by her own soft words and deeds of love. This only brought out the evil more distinctly in its hard outline ; and the very circumstance that she constantly tried to explain into good his father's austerity became her own refutation, and stamped that austerity as a great degree of tyranny.

Home thus became associated with disagreeable feelings to young Richard Sinclair ; who, being a boy of a giddy character, and naturally self-willed, could not cling to the good, despite of the admixture of evil. He neglected his books, fell into gross irregularities ; and the admonitions of his father, rendered useless from the above miserable system of discipline, were now, when most needed, thoroughly despised. The death of his elder brother, by which he was left an only son, softened for a while the harsh intercourse which subsisted between Richard and his father, and checked the youth for a little in his bad habits. But vice overcame him anew ; and, growing daily worse, he at length completed the character of the prodigal, by running off to sea, hardening his heart against his father's worth, and heedless of the soft affection of his mother.

The hardships of a sea-faring life, heightened by a series of peculiar misfortunes, still farther aggravated by a long course of bad health, gradually subdued the young prodigal's heart ; and after the lapse of several years we find him on his way returning to his native village, clad in the meanest attire, slow and irregular in his step ; his countenance, besides being of a dead yellow hue from late jaundice,

thin and worn to the bone ; yet improved in his moral nature, caring not for pride, ready to forgive, and anxious to be forgiven ; and, above all, yearning to confess his crimes and sorrows to a mother's unchanging love.

About the noon of an October day, he reached the churchyard of his native parish, his heart impelling him first to visit the burying-ground of his family, under the fear, not the less striking because altogether vague, that he might there see a recent grave ; for he had heard nothing of his parents since his first departure to sea. As he entered the graveyard by a small postern, he saw a funeral coming in by the main gate on the opposite side ; and wishing not to be observed, he turned into a small plantation of poplars and silver firs, which hid the place of graves from the view of the clergyman's manse windows. Onward came the sable group slowly to the middle of the churchyard, where lay, indicating the deep parallel grave beside it, the heap of fat, clammy earth, from which two or three ragged boys were taking handfuls, to see, from its restless crumbling, whether it was the dust of the wicked, which, according to a popular belief, never lies still for a moment. The dark crowd took their places round the grave ; a little bustle was heard as the coffin was uncovered ; it was lowered by the creaking cords, and again the heads of the company were all narrowly bent over it for a moment. Not a sound was heard in the air, save the flitting wing of some little bird among the boughs ; the ruffling of another, as, with bill engulfed in its feathers, it picked the insects from its skin ; and the melancholy cry of a single chaffinch, which foretold the coming rain.

In natural accordance with the solemnity of the mourners before him, our youth, as he stood in the plantation, raised his hat ; and when the crowd drew back to give room to the sexton

and his associates to dash in the earth, he leant upon the wall, looking earnestly over it, to recognise, if possible, the prime mourner. At the head of the grave, more forward a little than the others, and apart in his sad privilege, stood a man, apparently about sixty years of age, of a strong frame,—in which yet there was trembling,—and a fine open bald forehead ; and, notwithstanding that the face of the mourner was compressed with the lines of unusual affliction, and bowed down over his hat, which with both hands was pressed upon his mouth, Richard saw him and knew him but too well—Oh, God ! his own father ! And wildly the youth's eyes rambled around the throng, to penetrate the mystery of his own loss, till on his dim eyeballs reeled the whole group, now scattered and melted to mist, now gathered and compressed into one black, shapeless heap.

But now the thick air began to twinkle, as it still darkened ; and the rain, which to the surprise of all had been kept up so long, began to fall out in steep-down streams from the low-hung clouds, driving the black train from the half-finished grave, to mix with a throng of other people, apparently assembling for public worship, who ran along the sides of the church in haste to reach the doors. The bell began to toll, but ceased almost in a minute ; the clergyman hurried by in his white bands ; and before Richard could leave the plantation and advance into the churchyard,—perhaps for the purpose of inquiring who was the person just entombed,—every one was in save that bareheaded man—God bless him !—who, heedless of the rain, still stood by the sexton, whose spade was now beating round the wet turf of the compacted grave. The young prodigal had not the heart, under a most awful sense of his own errors, which now overcame him, to advance to his afflicted father. On the contrary, to avoid his observation,

he slunk away behind the church, and by a door, which likewise admitted to an old staircase leading to a family division of the gallery, he got into a back aisle, thickly peopled with spectral marbles, which, through two or three small panes, admitted a view of the interior of the church. “ Have I lived not to know,” said he to himself, “ when comes God’s most holy Sabbath-day ? Assuredly, this loss of reckoning, this confusion of heart, is of very hell itself. But hold—to-day is Monday ; then it must be the day after a solemn commemoration, in this place, of Christ’s bleeding sacrifice for men. I shall sit me down on this slab a while, and see if there may be any good thing for me —any gleam of the glorious shield that wards off evil thoughts and the fears of the soul—any strong preparation of faith to take me up by the hand, and lead me through my difficulties. At all events, I shall try to pray with the good for the mourners, that claim from me a thousand prayers : and God rest that dead one !”

Owing to the unusual darkness in the church, the twenty-third psalm was chosen by the clergyman, as one that could be sung by most of the congregation without referring to the book ; and its beautiful pastoral devotion suited well with the solemn dedication which yesterday had been made of a little flock to the care of the Great Shepherd, and with their hopes of His needful aid. And the sweet voices of the young, who in early piety had vowed themselves to God, seemed to have caught the assured and thrilling song of the redeemed ; and their white robes, as they rose to pray, twinkled like glimpses of angels’ parting wings, bringing home more deeply to the heart of the poor youth in the aisle a sense of his misery as an alien and an outcast from the ordinances of salvation.

Richard made an effort to attend to the instructions of the clergyman ; but

his heart was soon borne away from attention ; and so anxious did he become in the new calculation, which of his father's family it might be whom he had just seen interred, that he could not refrain from going out before the church windows and looking at the new grave. Heedless of being seen, he measured it by stepping, and was convinced, from its length, that either his mother or his sister Mary must be below. "God forbid !" he ejaculated, "that it should be my poor mother's grave ! that she should be gone for ever, ere I have testified my sense of all her love !" It struck him, with a new thought of remorse, that he was wishing the other alternative, that it might be his sister Mary's. And then he thought upon early days, when she who was his first playmate led him with her little hand abroad in summer days to the green meadows, and taught him to weave the white-fingered rushes, and introduced him, because she was his elder, to new sports and playfellows ; whose heart, he knew, would brook to lie beneath the cold flowers of the spring sooner than give up its love for him, prodigal though he was ; and how was the alternative much better, if it was she whom he had lost ! As he made these reflections, he was again sauntering into the aisle, where, sitting down in his former seat, the sad apprehension that his mother was dead laid siege to his heart. Her mild image, in sainted white, rose to his mind's eye ; and she seemed to bend over him, and to say to him, "Come, my care-worn boy, and tell me how it has fared with you in the hard world ?" This vision soon gave place to severe realities ; and in bitter sadness he thought of her who came each night to his bedside when he was a little child, to kiss him, and arrange the clothes around him that his little body might be warm.

With a reeling unsteadiness of mind which, from very earnestness, could

not be stayed upon its object, he tried to remember his last interview with her, and the tenor of his last letter to her, to find out what kind expressions he had used, till, painfully conscious that he could muster little to make up an argument of his love, he was again left to guess his mother's anguish of soul in her last hour over his neglect, and to grapple with the conviction that his own folly had brought her down prematurely to the grave. At length his heart, becoming passive amidst the very multitude and activity of reflections that were tugging at it from all sides, yielded to the weariness which the day's fatigue, acting upon his frame, worn by late fever, had induced, and he fell into a deep sleep. When he awoke, the voice of the clergyman had ceased, and all was silence in the church ; the interior of which as he looked through the small pane, he saw had been darkened by the shutting of the window-boards. Next moment he glanced at the aisle door and saw it closed upon him. Then looking round all over the place, with that calmness which signifies a desperate fear at hand, "Here I am, then !" he exclaimed ; "if that door be locked upon me, as I dread it is !" Cautiously he went to it, as if afraid of being resolved in his dreadful apprehension ; and, after first feeling with his hand that the bolt was drawn upon him, he tried to open it, and was made distinctly aware of his horrid captivity. Sharply he turned aghast, as if to address some one behind him ; then turning again to the door, he shook it with all his strength, in the hope that some one might yet be lingering in the churchyard, and so might hear him. No one, however, came to his assistance ; and now the reflection burst full and black upon him, that here he might remain unheard till he died of hunger. His heart and countenance fell, when he remembered how remote the churchyard was from the village, and from the public way, and how long it was till next Sun-

day should come round. From boyhood recollection he remembered well this same aisle door ; that it was black on the outside, with here and there large white commas to represent tears ; and that it was very thick, and yet farther strengthened by being studded with a great number of large iron nails.

" Yet I must try to the very utmost," he said, " either to break it or make myself be heard by the inmates of the manse, which is my best chance of release." Accordingly he borrowed as much impetus as the breadth of the vault allowed him, and flung himself upon the door in a series of attacks, shouting at the same time with all his

might. But the door stood firm as a rock despite of him ; nor could he distinguish, as he listened from time to time, the slightest symptoms of his having been heard by any one. He went to the small grated window which lighted this house of death, and after watching at it for some time, he saw an old woman pass along a footpath beyond the graveyard, with a bundle of sticks upon her head ; but she never seemed to hear him when he called upon her. A little afterwards he saw two boys sauntering near the gate of the burying-ground ; but though they heard him when he cried, it only made them scamper off, to all appearance mightily terrified.

CHAPTER II.

WITH the calmness almost of despair, when the closing eve took away his chance of seeing any more stray passengers that day, the poor youth groped his way to his marble slab, and again sat down with a strange vacuity of heart, as if it would refuse further thought of his dismal situation. A new fear came over him, however, when daylight thickened at the grated window of his low room, and the white marbles grew dark around him. And not without creeping horror did he remember that from this very aisle it was that old Johnny Hogg, a former sexton, was said to have seen a strange vile animal issue forth one moonlight night, run to a neighbouring stream, and after lapping a little, hurry back, trotting over the blue graves, and slinking through beneath the table stones, as if afraid of being shut out from its dull, fat haunt. Hurriedly, yet with keen inspection, was young Sinclair fascinated to look around him over the dim floor ; and while the horrid apprehension came over him, that he was just on the point of seeing the two eyes of the gloating beast, white and muddy from its un-

hallowed surfeits, he drew up his feet on the slab on which he sat, lest it should crawl over them. A thousand tales—true to boyish impressions—crowded on his mind ; and by this rapid movement of sympathetic associations, enough of itself, while it lasts, to make the stoutest heart nervous, and from the irritation of his body from other causes, so much was his mind startled from its propriety that he thought he heard the devil ranging through the empty pews of the church ; and there seemed to flash before his eyes a thousand hurrying shapes, condemned and fretted ghosts of malignant aspect, that cannot rest in their wormy graves, and milky-curdled babes of untimely birth, that are buried in twilights, never to see the sun.

Soon, however, these silly fears went off, and the tangible evil of his situation again stood forth, and drove him to renew his cries for assistance, and his attacks upon the door, ere he should be quite enfeebled by hunger and disease. Again he had to sit down, after spending his strength in vain.

By degrees, he fell into a stupor of

sleep, peopled with strange dreams, in all of which, from natural accordance with his waking conviction that he had that day seen his mother's burial, her image was the central figure. In danger she was with him—in weariness—in captivity ; and when he seemed to be struggling for life, under delirious fever, then, too, she was with him, with her soft assuaging kiss, which was pressed upon his throbbing brow, till his frenzy was cooled away, and he lay becalmed in body and in spirit beneath her love. Under the last modification of his dream, he stood by confused waters, and saw his mother drowning in the floods. He heard her faintly call upon his name ; her arms were outstretched to him for help, as she was borne fast away into the dim and wasteful ocean ; and, unable to resist this appeal, he stripped off his clothes and plunged in to attempt her rescue. So vivid was this last part of his vision, that in actual correspondence with the impulse of his dream, the poor prodigal in the aisle threw off his clothes to the shirt to prepare himself for swimming to her deliverance. One or two cold ropy drops, which at this moment fell from the vaulted roof upon his neck, woke him distinctly, and recalled him to a recollection of his situation as a captive. But being unable to account for his being naked, he thought that he had lost, or was about to lose, his reason ; and, weeping aloud like a little child, he threw himself upon his knees, and cried to God to keep fast his heart and mind from that dismal alienation. He was yet prostrate when he heard feet walking on the echoing pavement of the church ; and at the same time a light shone round about him, filling the whole aisle, and showing distinctly the black letters on the white tombstones.

His first almost insane thought was that a miraculous answer was given to his prayer, and that, like the two

apostles of old, he had won an angel from heaven to release him from his midnight prison. But the footsteps went away again by the door, and ceased entirely ; whilst at the same time the light was withdrawn, leaving him to curse his folly, which, under an absurd hope, had lost an opportunity of immediate disenthralment. He was about to call aloud, to provoke a return of the visitation, when, through the grated window of the aisle, he observed a light among the graves, which he set himself to reconnoitre. It was one of those raw, unwholesome nights, choked up with mists to the very throat, which thicken the breath of old men with asthma, and fill graveyards with gross and rotten beings ; and, though probably not more than twenty yards distant, Sinclair could not guess what the light was, so tangled and bedimmed was it with the spongy vapours.

At length he heard human voices, and was glad to perceive the light approaching his window. When the men, whom he now saw were two in number, had got within a few yards of him, he called out,—

“ I pray you, good people, be not alarmed ; I have been locked up in this aisle to-day, and must die of hunger in it if you do not get me out. You can get into the church, and I doubt not you will find the key of this aisle-door in the sexton's closet. Now, I hope you have enough of manhood not to let me remain in this horrid place from any silly fears on your part.”

Instead of answering to this demand, the fellows took instantly to their heels, followed by the vehement reproaches of our hero, whose heart at the same time was smitten by the bitter reflection, that every chance of attracting attention to his captivity was likely to be neutralized by the superstitious fears of such as might hear him from his vault. In a few minutes the light again approached, and after much whispering betwix-

themselves, one of the men demanded who and what the prisoner was.

"I can only tell you farther," replied Sinclair, "that I fell asleep in this place during the sermon,—no very creditable confession, you will observe,—and that, when I awoke, I found myself fairly entrapped."

The men retired round the church, and with joy Richard heard next minute the rattling of the keys as they were taken from the sexton's closet. In another minute he heard the door of his dungeon tried; it opened readily; and with a start, as if they thought it best at once to rush upon their danger, his two deliverers, whom he recognised to be of his native village, advanced a little into the aisle, the foremost bearing the light, which he held forward and aloft, looking below it into the interior, to be aware for what sort of captive they had opened. No sooner did Sinclair stand disclosed to them, naked as he was to the shirt—for he had not yet got on his clothes—than the sternmost man, with something between a yell and a groan, bended on his knees, whilst his hair bristled in the extremity of his terror, and catching hold of his companion's limbs, he looked through betwixt them upon the naked spirit of the aisle. The foremost man lowered the light by inches, and cried aloud,—

"Fear-fa' me! take haud o' me, Geordie Heart! It's the yellow dead rising from their graves. Eh! there's the lightning! and is yon no an auld crooked man i' the corner?"

"Will Balmer! Will Balmer! whaur are ye?" cried the other, from between Will's very knees, which, knocking upon the prostrate man's cheeks, made him chatter and quiver in his wild outcry.

"Oh! there's the lightning again! Gin we could but meet wife and bairns ance mair!" ejaculated the foremost man.

"Lord have mercy on my widow and sma' family!" echoed the sternmost.

"Tout! it's but the laird's drucken mulatto after a'" said the former, gathering a little confidence.

"Oh, if it were! or but a man wi' the jaundice, our days might be lengthened," cried the latter.

Richard advanced to explain; but at that moment the dull firmament in the east, which had been lightning from time to time (as often happens previously to very rainy weather), opened with another sheeted blaze of white fire, the reflection of which on Richard's yellow face, as he came forward, seemed to the terrified rustics a peculiar attribute of his nature. With a groan, he in the van tried a backward retreat; but being straitened in the legs, he tumbled over his squatted companion. Leaving his neighbour, however, to sit still upon his knees, he that was the foremost man gathered himself up so well, that he crept away on his hands and feet, till, getting right below the bell-rope at the end of the church, he ventured to rise and begin to jow it, making the bell toll at an unusual rate. The inmates of the manse were immediately alarmed; and first came the minister's man, who demanded the meaning of such ill-timed ringing.

"Oh! Tam Jaffray! Tam Jaffray! sic a night's in this kirkyard! If sae be it's ordeened that I may ring an' live, I'll haud to the tow. Oh! Tam Jaffray! Tam Jaffray! what's become o' puir Geordie Heart? If the Wandering Jew o' Jerusalem, or the Yellow Fever frae Jamaica, is no dancing mother-naked in the aisle, then it behoves to be the dead rising frae their graves. I trust we'll a' be found prepared! Rin for a lantern, Tam.—Eh! look to that lightning!"

A light was soon brought from the manse; and a number of people from the village having joined the original alarmists, a considerable muster advanced to the aisle door just as Sinclair was stepping from it. Taking the light

from one of the countrymen, he returned to the relief of the poor villager, who was still upon his knees, and who, with great difficulty, was brought to comprehend an explanation of the whole affair. The crowd made way as Sinclair proceeded to leave the graveyard; but whether it was that they were indignant because the neighbourhood had been so much disturbed, or whether they considered that proper game was afoot for sportive insolence, they began to follow and shout after him—

“Come back, ye yellow neegur! we’ll no send ye!—stop him! Come back, ye squiff, and we’ll gie ye a dead subject!—Stop the resurrectionist!—After him, gie him a paik, and see if he’s but a batch o’ badger skins dyed yellow!—hurrah !”

Sinclair wishing, for several reasons, to be clear at once of the mob, was in the act of springing over the dyke into the plantation already mentioned, when he was struck by a stick on the head, which brought him back senseless to the ground. The crowd was instantly around the prostrate youth, and in the caprice or better pity of human nature, began to be sorry for his pale condition.

“It was a pity to strike the puir lad that gate,” said one. “Some folk shouldna been sae rash the day, I think,” remarked another. “Stand back,” cried Tam Jaffray, pushing from right to left; “stand back, and gie the puir fallow air. Back, Jamieson, wi’ your shauchled shins; it was you that cried first that he was a resurrectionist.”

The clergyman now advanced and asked what was the matter.

“It’s only a yellow yorlin we’ve catched in the aisle,” cried an insolent clown, who aspired to be the prime wit of the village; “he was a bare gorblin a few minutes syne, and now he’s full feathered.” This provoked a laugh from groundlings of the same stamp, and the fellow, grinning himself, was tempted to

try another bolt,—“And he’s gayan weel tamed by this time.”

“Peace, fellow,” said the minister, who had now seen what was wrong; “peace, sir, and do not insult the unfortunate. I am ashamed of all this.”

By the directions of the clergyman, the poor prodigal was carried into the manse, where he soon recovered from the immediate stunning effects of the blow he had received.

“How is all this?” was his first question of surprise, addressed to his host. “May I request to know, sir, why I am here?”

“In virtue of a rash blow, which we all regret,” answered the minister.

“I crave your pardon, sir,” returned the youth. “I can now guess that I am much indebted to your kindness.”

“May we ask you, young man,” said the clergyman, “how it has happened that you have so alarmed our peaceful neighbourhood?”

The poor prodigal succinctly stated the way of his imprisonment in the aisle; and with this explanation the charitable old clergyman seemed perfectly satisfied. Not so, however, was his ruling elder, who, deeming his presence and authority indispensable in any matter for which the parish bell could be rung, had early rushed to the scene of alarm, and was now in the manse, at the head of a number of the villagers. He, on the contrary, saw it necessary to remark (glancing at his superior for approbation),—

“Sae, mind, young man, in times future, what comes of sleeping in the time of two peecous and yedifying discourses.”

“A good caution, John,” said the mild old minister; “but we must make allowances.”

“Was it you that struck me down?” said Richard eagerly to an old man, who, with evident sorrow working in his hard muscular face, stood watching this scene with intense interest, and who, indeed, was his own father.

Smitten to the heart by this sudden question of the youth, ashamed of his own violent spirit on such a night, and grieved, after the explanation given, for the condition of the poor lad before him, old Sinclair groaned, turned quickly half round, shifted his feet in the agony of avowal,—then seizing his unknown prodigal boy by the hand, he wrung it eagerly, and said,—

“There’s my hand, young man, in the first place; and now, it was me indeed that struck you down, but I thought ——”

“Oh! my prophetic conscience!” interrupted the poor prodigal, whilst he looked his father ruefully in the face, and returned fervently the squeeze of his hand. “Make no apologies to me, thou good old man; thy blow was given under a most just dispensation.”

“I sent two neighbours,” said the old man, still anxious to explain, “to see that all was right about the grave. I heard the alarm, and came off wi’ my stick in my hand. I heard them crying to stop ye, for ye were a resurrectionist. I saw ye jumping suspiciously into the planting. Ye maun forgie me the rest, young man, for I thought ye had been violating the grave of a beloved wife.”

“My own poor mother!” sobbed forth the prodigal.

Old Sinclair started—his strong chest heaved—the recollection of his rash blow, together with the circumstance that it had been dispensed on such a solemn night, and near the new grave of one whose gentle spirit had been but too much troubled by the harshness and waywardness of both husband and son, came over his heart with the sudden conviction that his boy and himself were justly punished by the same blow, for their mutual disrespect in former years. Yearning pity over that son’s unhappy appearance, and the natural flow of a father’s heart, long subdued on behalf of his poor lost prodigal, were mingled in the old man’s deep emotion; and he

sought relief by throwing himself in his boy’s arms, and weeping on his neck.

His sturdy nature soon recovered itself a little; yet the bitter spray was winked from his compressed eyes as he shook his head; and the lower part of his face quivered with unusual affliction, as he said in a hoarse whisper—

“My own Richard!—my man, has your father lived to strike you to the ground like a brute beast, and you sae ill?—on the very day, too, o’ your mother’s burial, that loved ye aye sae weel! But come away wi’ me to your father’s house, for ye are sick as death, and the auld man that used ye ower ill is sair humbled the night, Richard!”

The prodigal’s heart could not stand this confession of a father. His young bosom heaved as if about to be rent to pieces; the *mother*, and *hysterica pussio* of old Lear, rose in his straitened throat, mastering the struggling respiration, and he fell back in a violent fit. His agonized parent ran to the door, as if seeking assistance, he knew not what or where; then checking himself in a moment, and hastening back, yet without looking on his son, he grasped the clergyman strongly by the hand, crying out, “Is he gone?—is my callant dead?”

Ordering the people to withdraw from around the prostrate youth, whose head was now supported by the clergyman’s beautiful and compassionate daughter, the kind old pastor led forward the agonised father, and pointing to his reviving son, told him that all would soon be well again. With head depressed upon his bosom, his hard hands slowly wringing each other, while they were wetted with the tears which rained from his glazed eyes, old Sinclair stood looking down upon the ghastly boy, whose eye was severely swollen, whilst his cheek was stained with the clotted blood which had flowed from the wound above the temples, inflicted by his own father.

After standing a while in this posi-

tion, the old man drew a white napkin from his pocket, and, as if himself unable for the task, he gave it to one of his neighbours, and pointed to the blood on the face of his prodigal boy, signifying that he wished it wiped away. This was done accordingly; and, in a few moments more, Richard rose, recovered from his fit, and modestly thanking the clergyman and his beautiful daughter for their attentions to him, he signified his resolve to go home immediately with his father. The kind old minister would fain have kept him all night, alleging the danger of exposing himself in such a state to the night air; but the youth was determined in his purpose; and old Sinclair cut short the matter by shaking the hand of his pastor, whilst, without saying a word, he looked him kindly in

the face to express his thanks, and then by leading his son away by the arm.

The villagers, who had crowded into the manse, judging this one of those levelling occasions when they might intrude into the best parlour, allowed the father and son to depart without attempting immediately to follow—nature teaching them that they had no right to intermeddle with the sacred communings of the son and father's repentance and forgiveness, or with the sorrow of their common bereavement. Yet the rude throng glanced at the minister, as if surprised and disappointed that the thing had ended so simply; then slunk out of the room, apprehensive, probably, of some rebuke from him. The ruling elder, however, remained behind, and wherefore not?

THE BARLEY FEVER—AND REBUKE.

By D. M. MOIR ("DELTA").

Sages their solemn een may steek,
And raise a philosophic reek,
And, physically, causes seek
In clime and season;
But tell me *Whisky's* name in Greek,
I'll tell the reason.—*Burns.*

ON the morning after the business of the playhouse happened,* I had to take my breakfast in my bed,—a thing very uncommon for me, being generally up by cock-craw, except on Sunday mornings whiles, when ilka ane, according to the bidding of the Fourth Commandment, has a license to do as he likes,—having a desperate sore head, and a squeamishness at the stomach, occasioned, I jalouse, in a great measure from what Mr Glen and me had discussed at Widow Grassie's, in the shape of warm toddy, over our cracks con-

* See ante, "My First and Last Play," p. 394.

cerning what is called the agricultural and the manufacturing interests. So our wife, puir body, pat a thimbleful of brandy—Thomas Mixem's real—into my first cup of tea, which had a wonderful virtue in putting all things to rights; so that I was up and had shapit a pair of leddy's corsets (an article in which I sometimes dealt) before ten o'clock, though, the morning being gey cauld, I didna dispense with my Kilmarnock.

At eleven in the forenoon, or thereabouts,—maybe five minutes before or after, but nae matter,—in comes my crony Maister Glen, rather dazed-like

about the een, and wi' a large piece of white sticking-plaister, about half-a-nail wide, across one of his cheeks, and over the brig o' his nose ; giving him a wauff, outlandish, and rather blackguard sort of appearance, so that I was a thocht uneasy at what neebours might surmeese concerning our intimacy ; but the honest man accounted for the thing in a very feasible manner, from the falling down on that side of his head of one of the brass candlesticks, while he was lying on his braidside, before ane of the fums in the stramash.

His purpose of calling was to tell me that he couldna leave the town without looking in upon me to bid me fareweel ; mair betoken, as he intended sending in his son Mungo wi' the carrier for a trial, to see how the line of life pleased him, and how I thocht he wad answer —a thing which I was glad came from his side of the house, being likely to be in the upshot the best for both parties. Yet I thocht he wad find our way of doing so canny and comfortable, that it wasna very likely he could ever start objections ; and I must confess, that I lookit forrit with nae sma' degree of pride, seeing the probability of my sune having the son of a Lammermuir farmer sitting cross-leggit, cheek for jowl wi' me, on the board, and bound to serve me at all lawful times, by night and day, by a regular indenture of five years. Maister Glen insisted on the laddie having a three months' trial ; and then, after a wee show of standing out, just to make him aware that I could be elsewhere fitted if I had a mind, I agreed that the request was reasonable, and that I had nae yearthly objections to conforming wi't. So, after giein' him his meridian, and a bit of shortbread, we shook hands, and parted in the understanding, that his son would arrive on the tap of limping Jamie the carrier's cart, in the course, say, of a fortnight.

Through the hale course of the fore-part of the day, I remained geyan

queerish, as if something was working about my inwards, and a droll pain atween my een. The wife saw the case I was in, and advised me, for the sake of the fresh air, to take a step into the bit garden, and try a hand at the spade, the smell of the fresh earth being likely to operate as a cordial ; but na—it wadna do ; and whan I came in at ane o'clock to my dinner, the steam of the fresh broth, instead of making me feel as usual as hungry as a hawk, was like to turn my stamach, while the sight of the sheep's-head, ane o' the primest anes I had seen the hale season, made me as sick as a dog ; so I could dae naething but take a turn out again, and swig awa' at the sma' beer that never seemed able to slcken my drouth. At lang and last, I mindit having heard Andrew Red-beak, the excise-offisher, say, that nae-thing ever pat him right after a debosh, except something they ca'd a bottle of soda-water ; so my wife dispatched Benjie to the place where he kent it could befound, and he returned in a jiffie with a thing like a blacking-bottle below his daidly, as he was bidden. There being a wire ower the cork, for some purpose or ither, or maybe just to look neat, we had some fight to get it torn away, but at last we succeeded. I had turned about for a jug, and the wife was rummaging for a screw, while Benjie was fiddling away wi' his fingers at the cork—sauf us ! a' at ance it gaed a thud like thunder, driving the cork ower puir Benjie's head, while it spouted up in his een like a fire-engine, and I had only just time to throw down the jug, and up with the bottle to my mouth. Luckily, for the sixpence it cost, there was a drap o't left, which tasted by all the world just like brisk dish-washings ; but, for a' that, it had a wonderful power of setting me to rights ; and my noddle in a while began to clear up, like a March-day after a heavy shower.

I mind very weel too, on the afternoon of the dividual day, that my door-

neebour, Thomas Burlings, pappit in ; and, in our twa-handit crack ower the counter, after asking me in a dry, curious way, if I had come by nae skaith in the business of the play, he said, the thing had now spread far and wide, and was making a great noise in the world. I thocht the body a thocht sharp in his observes ; so I pretended to take it quite lightly, proceeding in my shaping-out a pair of buckskin-breeches, which I was making for ane of the duke's huntsmen ; so, seeing he was aff the scent, he said in a mair jocose way—“Weel, speaking about buckskins, I'll tell ye a gude story about that.”

“Let us hear't,” said I ; for I was in that sort of queerish way, that I didna care muckle about being very busy.

“Ye've get it as I heard it,” quo' Thomas ; “and its no less worth telling, that it bears a gude moral application in its tail, after the same fashion that a blister does gude by sucking away the vicious humours of the body, thereby making the very pain it gies precious.” And here—though maybe it was just my thocht—the body strokit his chin, and gied me a kind of half glee, as muckle as saying, “take that to ye, neebour.” But I deserved it all, and couldna take it ill aff his hand, being, like mysel, ane of the elders of our kirk, and an honest enough, preceese-speaking man.

“Ye see, ye ken,” said Thomas, “that the Breadalbane Fencibles, a wheen Highland birkies, were put into camp on Fisherraw links, maybe for the benefit of their douking, on account of the fiddle*—or maybe in case the French should land at the water-mouth—or maybe to gie the regiment the benefit of the sea air—or maybe to make their bare houghs hardier, for it was the winter time, frost and snaw being as plenty as ye like, and no sae scarce as pantaloons among the core, or for some ither reason, gude, bad, or

* See Dr Jamieson's “Scottish Dictionary.”

indifferent, which disna muckle matter. But, ye see, the lang and the short o' the story is, that there they were encamped, man and mother's son of them, going through their dreels by day, and sleeping by night—the privates in their tents, and the offishers in their markees ; living in the course of nature on their usual rations of beef and tammies, and sae on. So, ye understand me, there was nae such smart orderings of things in the army in thae days, the men not having the beef served out to them by a butcher, supplying each company or companies by a written contract, drawn up between him and the paymaster before sponsible witnesses ; but ilk a one bringing what pleased him, either tripe, trotters, steaks, cow's-cheek, pluck, hough, spar-rib, jiggot, or so forth.”

“Od !” said I, “Thomas, ye crack like a minister. Where did ye happen to pick up all that knowledge ?”

“Where should I have got it ? but from an auld half-pay sergeant-major, that lived in our spare room, and had been out in the American war, having seen a power of service, and been twice wounded,—ance in the aff cuit, and the ither time in the cuff of the neck.”

“I thocht as muckle,” said I : “but say on, man ; it's unco enter-taining.”

“Weel,” continued he, “let me see where I was at when ye stoppit me ; for maybe I'll hae to begin at the beginning again. For gif ye yenterrupt me, or edge in a word, or put me out by asking questions, I lose the thread of my discourse, and canna proceed.”

“Ou, let me see,” said I, “ye was about the contract concerning the beef.”

“Preceesely,” quo' Thomas, stretching out his forefinger ; “ye've said it to a hair. At that time, as I was observing, the butcher didna supply a company or companies, according to the terms of a contract, drawn up before sponsible witnesses, between him and the paymaster ; but the soldiers got

beef-money along with their pay ; with which said money, given them, ye observe, for said purpose, they were bound and obligated, in terms of the statute, to buy, purchase, and provide the said beef, twice a week or oftener, as it might happen ; an orderly offisher making inspection of the camp-kettles regularly every forenoon at ane o'clock or therabouts.

"So, as ye'll pay attention to observe, there was a private in Captain M'Tavish's company, the second to the left of the centre, of the name of Duncan MacAlpine, a wee, hardy, blackavised, in-knee'd creature, remarkable for naething that ever I heard tell of, except being reported to have shotten a gauger in Badenoch, or thereabouts ; and for having a desperate red nose, the effects, ye observe, I daursay,—the effects of drinking malt speerits.

"Weel, week after week passed ower, and better passed ower, and Duncan played aff his tricks, like another Herman Boaz, the slight-o'-hand juggler—him that's suspecket to be in league and paction with the deil. But ye'll hear."

"'Od, it's diverting, Thomas," said I to him ; "gang on, man."

"Weel, ye see, as I was observing. Let me see, where was I at? Ou ay, having a paction wi' the deil. So, when all were watching beside the camp-kettles, some stirring them wi' spurtles, or parritch-sticks, or forks, or whatever was necessary, the orderly offisher made a point and practice of regularly coming by, about the chap of ane past meridian, as I observed to ye before, to make inspection of what ilka ane had wared his pay on ; and what he had got simmering in the het water for his dinner.

"So, on the day concerning which I am about to speak, it fell out, as usual, that he happened to be making his rounds, halting a moment—or twa, maybe—before ilka pat ; the man that had the charge thereof, by the way of stirring like, clapping down his lang

fork, and bringing up the piece of meat, or whatever he happened to be making kail of, to let the inspector see whether it was lamb, pork, beef, mutton, or veal. For, ye observe," continued Thomas, gieing me, as I took it to mysel, another queer side look, "the purpose of the offisher making the inspection, was to see that they laid out their pay-money conform to military regulation ; and no to filling their stamicks, and ruining baith soul and body, by throwing it away on whisky, as but ower mony, that aiblins should hae kent better, have dune but ower aften."

"'Tis but too true," said I till him ; "but the best will fa' intil a faut sometimes. We have a' our failings, Thomas."

"Just so," answered Thomas ; "but where was I at? Ou, about the whisky. Weel, speaking about the whisky : ye see, the offisher, Lovetenant Todrick, I b'lief they called him, had made an observe about Duncan's kettle ; so, when he cam to him, Duncan was sitting in the lown side of a dyke, with his red nose, and a pipe in his cheek, on a big stane, glowering frae him anither way ; and, as I was saying, when he cam to him he said, 'Weel, Duncan MacAlpine, what have ye in your kettle the day, man ?'

"And Duncan, rinning down his lang fork, answered in his ain Highland brogue way—'Please your honour, just my auld fav'rite, tripe.'

"Deed, Duncan," said Lovetenant Todrick, or whatever they ca'd him, "it is an auld fav'rite, surely, for I have never seen ye have onything else for your denner, man."

"Every man to his taste, please your honour," answered Duncan MacAlpine ; "let ilka ane please her nainsel,"—hauling up a screed half a yard lang ; "ilka man to his taste, please your honour, Lovetenant Todrick."

"'Od, man," said I to him ; "'od, man, ye're a deacon at telling a story.

Ye're a queer hand. Weel, what cam next?"

"What think ye should come next?" quo' Thomas, drily.

"I'm sure I dinna ken," answered I.

"Weel," said he, "I'll tell; but where was I at?"

"Ou, at the observe of Lovetenant Todrick, or what they ca'ed him, about the tripe; and the answer of Duncan MacAlpine on that head, that 'ilka man had his ain taste.'"

"Vera true," said Lovetenant Todrick; "but lift it out a'thegither on that dish, till I get my specs on; for never since I was born, did I ever see before boiled tripe with buttons and button-holes intil't."

At this I set up a loud laughing, which I couldna help, though it was like to split my sides; but Thomas Burlings bade me whisht till I heard him out.

"Buttons and button-holes!" quo' Duncan MacAlpine. "Look again, wi' yer specs; for ye're surely wrang, Lovetenant Todrick."

"Buttons and button-holes! and'deed I am surely right, Duncan," answered Lovetenant Todrick, taking his specs deliberately aff the brig o' his nose, and faulding them thegither, as he put them, first into his morocco case, and syne into his pocket. "Howsomever, Duncan MacAlpine, I'll pass ye ower for this time, gif ye take my warning, and for the future ware yer paymoney on wholesome butcher's meat, like a Christian, and no be trying to delude your ain stamick, and your offisher's een, by haddin' up, on a fork, such a heathenish make-up for a dish, as the leg of a pair o' buckskin breeches!"

"Buckskin breeches!" said I; "and did he really and actually boil siccán trash to his dinner?"

"Nae sae far south as that yet, friend," answered Thomas. "Duncan wasna sae bowed in the intellect as ye imagine, and had some spice of clever-

ality about his queer manoeuvres.—Eat siccán trash to his dinner! Nae mair, Mansie, than ye intend to eat that iron guse ye're rinning alang that piece claih; but he wantit to make his offishers believe that his pay gaed the right way—like the Pharisees of old that keepit praying, in ell-lang faces, about the corners of the streets, and gaed hame wi' hearts full of wickedness and a' manner of cheatrie."

"And what way did his pay gang then?" askit I; "and hoo did he live?"

"I telled ye before, frien," answered Thomas, "that he was a deboshed creature; and, like ower mony in the warld, likit weel what didna do him ony good. It's a wearyfu' thing that whisky. I wish it could be banished to Botany Bay."

"It is that," said I. "Muckle and nae little sin does it breed and produce in this world."

"I'm glad," quo' Thomas, stroking down his chin in a sleet way. "I'm glad the guilty should see the folly o' their ain ways: it's the first step, ye ken, till amendment;—and indeed I tell't Maister Wiggle, when he sent me here, that I could almost become guude for yer being mair wary o' yer conduct for the future time to come."

This was like a thunder-clap to me, and I didna ken, for a jiffy, what to feel, think, or do, mair than perceiving that it was a piece of devilish cruelty on their pairts, taking things on this strict. As for myself, I could freely take sacred oath on the Book, that I hadnna had a dram in my head for four months before; the knowledge of which made my corruption rise like lightning, as a man is aye brave when he is innocent; so, gien' my pow a bit scart, I said briskly, "So ye're after some session business in this veesit, are ye?"

"Ye've just guessed it," answered Thomas Burlings, sleeking down his front hair with his fingers, in a sober

way; "we had a meeting this forenoon; and it was resolved ye should stand a public rebuke in the meeting-house, on Sunday next."

"Hang me, if I do!" answered I, thumping my niece down with all my might on the counter, and throwing back my cowl behind me, into a corner.

"No, man!" added I, snapping with great pith my finger and thumb in Thomas's een; "no for all the ministers and elders that ever were cleekit. They may do their best; and ye may tell them sae if ye like. I was born a free man; I live in a free country; I am the subject of a free king and constitution; and I'll be shot before I submit to such rank diabolical papistry."

"Hooly and fairly," quo' Thomas, staring a wee astonished like, and not a little surprised to see my birse up in this manner; for, when he thought upon shearing a lamb, he fund he had catched a tartar; so, calming down as fast as ye like, he said—"Hooly and fairly, Mansie" (or Maister Wauch, I believe, he did me the honour to ca' me), "they'll maybe no be sae hard as they threaten. But ye ken, my friend, I'm speaking to ye as a brither; it was an unco-like business for an elder, not only to gang till a play, which is ane of the deevil's rendezvouses, but to gang there in a state of liquor; making yoursel a

warld's wonder—and you an elder of our kirk!—I put the question to yourself soberly?"

His threatening I could despise, and could have fought, cuffed, and kickit, wi' a' the ministers and elders of the General Assembly, to say naething of the Relief Synod, and the Burgher Union, before I wad demeaned mysel to yield to what my inward speerit plainly telled me to be rank cruelty and injustice; but ah! his calm, brotherly, flattering way I couldna thole wi', and the tears came rapping into my een faster than it cared my manhood to let be seen; so I said till him, "Weel, weel, Thomas, I ken I have dune wrang; and I am sorry for't—they'll never find me in siccana scrape again."

Thomas Burlings then cam forrit in a friendly way, and shook hands wi' me; telling that he wad go back and plead afore them in my behalf. He said this ower again, as we pairted, at my shop door; and, to do him justice, surely he hadna been waur than his word, for I have aye attended the kirk as usual, standing, whan it came to my rotation, at the plate, and naebody, gentle nor semple, ever spoke to me on the subject of the playhouse, or minted the matter of the rebuke from that day to this.

ELPHIN IRVING, THE FAIRIES' CUPBEARER.

BY ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

CHAPTER I.

THE romantic vale of Corriewater, in Annandale, is regarded by the inhabitants, a pastoral and unmixed people, as the last border refuge of those beautiful and capricious beings, the fairies.

Many old people, yet living, imagine they have had intercourse of good words and good deeds with the "gude folk;" and continue to tell that in the ancient days the fairies danced on the hill, and

revelled in the glen, and showed themselves, like the mysterious children of the Deity of old, among the sons and daughters of men. Their visits to the earth were periods of joy and mirth to mankind, rather than of sorrow and apprehension. They played on musical instruments of wonderful sweetness and variety of note, spread unexpected feasts, the supernatural flavour of which overpowered on many occasions the religious scruples of the Presbyterian shepherds, performed wonderful deeds of horsemanship, and marched in midnight processions, when the sound of their elfin minstrelsy charmed youths and maidens into love for their persons and pursuits; and more than one family of Corriewater have the fame of augmenting the numbers of the elfin chivalry. Faces of friends and relatives, long since doomed to the battle trench, or the deep sea, have been recognised by those who dared to gaze on the fairy march. The maid has seen her lost lover, and the mother her stolen child; and the courage to plan and achieve their deliverance has been possessed by, at least, one border maiden. In the legends of the people of Corrievale, there is a singular mixture of elfin and human adventure, and the traditional story of the Cupbearer to the Queen of the Fairies appeals alike to our domestic feelings and imagination.

In one of the little green loops or bends, on the banks of Corriewater, mouldered walls, and a few stunted wild plum-trees and vagrant roses, still point out the site of a cottage and garden. A well of pure spring-water leaps out from an old tree-root before the door; and here the shepherds, shading themselves in summer from the influence of the sun, tell to their children the wild tale of Elphin Irving and his sister Phemie; and, singular as the story seems, it has gained full credence among the people where the scene is laid.

“I ken the tale and the place weel,”

(8)

interrupted an old woman, who, from the predominance of scarlet in her apparel, seemed to have been a follower of the camp; “I ken them weel, and the tale’s as true as a bullet to its aim, and a spark to powder. Oh, bonnie Corriewater! a thousand times have I pu’ed gowans on its banks wi’ ane that lies stiff and stark on a foreign shore in a bloody grave;” and sobbing audibly, she drew the remains of a military cloak over her face, and allowed the story to proceed.

When Elphin Irving and his sister Phemie were in their sixteenth year (for tradition says they were twins), their father was drowned in Corriewater, attempting to save his sheep from a sudden swell, to which all mountain streams are liable; and their mother, on the day of her husband’s burial, laid down her head on the pillow, from which, on the seventh day, it was lifted to be dressed for the same grave. The inheritance left to the orphans may be briefly described: seventeen acres of plough and pasture land, seven milk cows, and seven pet sheep (many old people take delight in odd numbers); and to this may be added seven bonnet pieces of Scottish gold, and a broad-sword and spear, which their ancestor had wielded with such strength and courage in the battle of Dryfe-sands, that the minstrel who sang of that deed of arms ranked him only second to the Scotts and the Johnstones.

The youth and his sister grew in stature and in beauty. The brent bright brow, the clear blue eye, and frank and blithe deportment of the former, gave him some influence among the young women of the valley; while the latter was no less the admiration of the young men, and at fair and dance, and at bridal, happy was he who touched but her hand, or received the benediction of her eye. Like all other Scottish beauties, she was the theme of many a song; and while tradition is yet busy

with the singular history of her brother, song has taken all the care that rustic minstrelsy can of the gentleness of her spirit, and the charms of her person.

"Now I vow," exclaimed a wandering piper, "by mine own honoured instrument, and by all other instruments that ever yielded music for the joy and delight of mankind, that there are more bonnie songs made about fair Phemie Irving than about all the other maidens of Annandale, and many of them are both high and bonnie. A proud lass maun she be, if her spirit hears; and men say the dust lies not insensible of beautiful verse; for her charms are breathed through a thousand sweet lips, and no farther gone than yestermorn, I heard a lass singing on a green hillside what I shall not readily forget. If ye like to listen, ye shall judge; and it will not stay the story long nor mar it much, for it is short, and about Phemie Irving." And accordingly he chanted the following rude verses, not unaccompanied by his honoured instrument, as he called his pipe, which chimed in with great effect, and gave richness to a voice which felt better than it could express:—

FAIR PHEMIE IRVING.

I.

*Gay is thy glen, Corrie,
With all thy groves flowering:
Green is thy glen, Corrie,
When July is showering;
And sweet is yon wood, where
The small birds are bowering,
And there dwells the sweet one
Whom I am adoring.*

II.

*Her round neck is whiter
Than winter when snowing;
Her meek voice is milder
Than Ae in its flowing;
The glad ground yields music
Where she goes by the river;
One kind glance would charm me
For ever and ever.*

III.

*The proud and the wealthy
To Phemie are bowing;
No looks of love win they
With sighing or suing;*

*Far away maun I stand
With my rude wooing,
She's a flow'ret too lovely
To bloom for my pu'ing—*

IV.

*O were I yon violet
On which she is walking;
O were I yon small bird
To which she is talking;
Or yon rose in her hand,
With its ripe ruddy blossom;
Or some pure gentle thought,
To be blest with her bosom!*

This minstrel interruption, while it established Phemie Irving's claim to grace and to beauty, gave me additional confidence to pursue the story.

But minstrel skill and true love tale seemed to want their usual influence, when they sought to win her attention; she was only observed to pay most respect to those youths who were most beloved by her brother; and the same hour that brought these twins to the world, seemed to have breathed through them a sweetness and an affection of heart and mind, which nothing could divide. If, like the virgin queen of the immortal poet, she walked "in maiden meditation fancy free," her brother Elphin seemed alike untouched with the charms of the fairest virgins in Corrie. He ploughed his field, he reaped his grain, he leaped, he ran and wrestled, and danced and sang, with more skill and life and grace than all other youths of the district; but he had no twilight and stolen interviews. When all other young men had their loves by their side, he was single, though not unsought; and his joy seemed never perfect save when his sister was near him. If he loved to share his time with her, she loved to share her time with him alone, or with the beasts of the field, or the birds of the air. She watched her little flock late, and she tended it early; not for the sordid love of the fleece, unless it was to make mantles for her brother, but with the look of one who had joy in its company.

The very wild creatures, the deer and the hares, seldom sought to shun her approach, and the bird forsook not its nest, nor stinted its song, when she drew nigh ; such is the confidence which maiden innocence and beauty inspire.

It happened one summer, about three years after they became orphans, that rain had been for a while withheld from the earth ; the hillsides began to parch, the grass in the vales to wither, and the stream of Corrie was diminished between its banks to the size of an ordinary rill. The shepherds drove their flocks to moorlands, and marsh and tarn had their reeds invaded by the scythe, to supply the cattle with food. The sheep of his sister were Elphin's constant care ; he drove them to the moistest pastures during the day, and he often watched them at midnight, when flocks, tempted by the sweet dewy grass, are known to browse eagerly, that he might guard them from the fox, and lead them to the choicest herbage. In these nocturnal watchings he sometimes drove his little flock over the water of Corrie, for the fords were hardly ankle-deep ; or permitted his sheep to cool themselves in the stream, and taste the grass which grew along the brink. All this time not a drop of rain fell, nor did a cloud appear in the sky.

One evening during her brother's absence with the flock, Phemie sat at her cottage door, listening to the bleatings of the distant folds, and the lessened murmur of the water of Corrie, now scarcely audible beyond its banks. Her eyes, weary with watching along the accustomed line of road for the return of Elphin, were turned on the pool beside her, in which the stars were glimmering fitful and faint. As she looked, she imagined the water grew brighter and brighter ; a wild illumination presently shone upon the pool, and leaped from bank to bank, and, suddenly changing into a human form, ascended the margin, and passing her, glided swiftly into

the cottage. The visionary form was so like her brother in shape and air, that, starting up, she flew into the house, with the hope of finding him in his customary seat. She found him not ; and impressed with the terror which a wraith or apparition seldom fails to inspire, she uttered a shriek so loud and so piercing as to be heard at Johnstonebank, on the other side of the vale of Corrie.

An old woman now rose suddenly from her seat in the window-sill, the living dread of shepherds, for she travelled the country with a brilliant reputation for witchcraft, and thus she broke in upon the narrative : "I vow, young man, ye tell us the truth upset and down-thrust ; I heard my douce grandmother say that on the night when Elphin Irving, disappeared—disappeared, I shall call it, for the bairn can but be gone for a season, to return to us in his own appointed time,—she was seated at the fireside at Johnstonebank ; the laird had laid aside his bonnet to take the Book, when a shriek mair loud, believe me, than a mere woman's shriek,—and they can shriek loud enough, else they're sair wranged,—came over the water of Corrie, so sharp and shrilling, that the pewter plates dinnelled on the wall ; such a shriek, my douce grandmother said, as rang in her ear till the hour of her death, and she lived till she was aughtie and aught, forty full ripe years after the event. But there is another matter, which, doubtless, I cannot compel ye to believe ; it was the common rumour that Elphin Irving came not into the world like the other sinful creatures of the earth, but was one of the Kane-bairns of the fairies, whilk they had to pay to the enemy of man's salvation every seventh year. The poor lady-fairy,—a mother's aye a mother, be she elf's flesh or Eve's flesh,—hid her elf son beside the christened flesh in Marion Irving's cradle, and the auld enemy lost his prey for a time. Now hasten on with your story, which is not

a boddle the waur for me. The maiden saw the shape of her brother, fell into a faint or a trance, and the neighbours came flocking in. Gang on wi' your tale, young man, and dinna be affronted because an auld woman helped ye wi' it."

It is hardly known, I resumed, how long Phemie Irving continued in a state of insensibility. The morning was far advanced, when a neighbouring maiden found her seated in an old chair, as white as monumental marble ; her hair, about which she had always been solicitous, loosened from its curls, and hanging disordered over her neck and bosom, her hands and forehead. The maiden touched the one and kissed the other ; they were as cold as snow ; and her eyes, wide open, were fixed on her brother's empty chair, with the intensity of gaze of one who had witnessed the appearance of a spirit. She seemed insensible of any one's presence, and sat fixed, and still, and motionless. The maiden, alarmed at her looks, thus addressed her : "Phemie, lass, Phemie Irving ! Dear me, but this is awful ! I have come to tell ye that seven o' yer pet sheep have escaped drowning in the water ; for Corrie, sae quiet and sae gentle yestreen, is rolling and dashing frae bank to bank this morning. Dear me, woman, dinna let the loss o' the world's gear bereave ye of your senses. I would rather make ye a present of a dozen mug-eves of the Tinwald brood mysel ; and now I think on't, if ye'll send ower Elphin, I will help him hame with them in the gloaming mysel. So Phemie, woman, be comforted."

At the mention of her brother's name, she cried out, "Where is he ? oh, where is he ?"—gazed wildly round, and, shuddering from head to foot, fell senseless on the floor. Other inhabitants of the valley, alarmed by the sudden swell of the river, which had augmented to a torrent deep and impassable, now came in to inquire if any loss had been sus-

tained, for numbers of sheep and teds of hay had been observed floating down about the dawn of the morning. They assisted in reclaiming the unhappy maiden from her swoon ; but insensibility was joy compared to the sorrow to which she awakened.

"They have ta'en him away, they have ta'en him away ;" she chanted in a tone of delirious pathos ; "him that was whiter and fairer than the lily on Lyddal-lee. They have long sought, and they have long sued, and they had the power to prevail against my prayers at last. They have ta'en him away ; the flower is plucked from among the weeds, and the dove is slain amid a flock of ravens. They came with shout, and they came with song, and they spread the charm, and they placed the spell, and the baptised brow has been bowed down to the unbaptised hand. They have ta'en him away, they have ta'en him away ; he was too lovely, and too good, and too noble, to bless us with his continuance on earth ; for what are the sons of men compared to him ?—the light of the moonbeam to the morning sun ; the glow-worm to the eastern star. They have ta'en him away, the invisible dwellers of the earth. I saw them come on him, with shouting and with singing, and they charmed him where he sat, and away they bore him ; and the horse he rode was never shod with iron, nor owned before the mastery of human hand. They have ta'en him away, over the water, and over the wood, and over the hill. I got but ae look o' his bonnie blue ee, but ae look. But as I have endured what never maiden endured, so will I undertake what never maiden undertook,—I will win him from them all. I know the invisible ones of the earth ; I have heard their wild and wondrous music in the wild woods, and there shall a christened maiden seek him and achieve his deliverance."

She paused, and glancing round a

circle of condoling faces, down which the tears were dropping like rain, said, in a calm, but still delirious tone,—

“ Why do you weep, Mary Halliday? and why do you weep, John Graeme? Ye think that Elphin Irving,—oh, it’s a bonnie, bonnie name, and dear to many a maiden’s heart as well as mine,—ye think that he is drowned in Corrie, and ye will seek in the deep, deep pools for the bonnie, bonnie corse, that

ye may weep over it, as it lies in its last linen, and lay it, amid weeping and wailing, in the dowie kirkyard. Ye may seek, but ye shall never find; so leave me to trim up my hair, and prepare my dwelling, and make myself ready to watch for the hour of his return to upper earth.”

And she resumed her household labours with an alacrity which lessened not the sorrow of her friends.

CHAPTER II.

MEANWHILE, the rumour flew over the vale that Elphin Irving was drowned in Corriewater. Matron and maid, old man and young, collected suddenly along the banks of the river, which now began to subside to its natural summer limits, and commenced their search; interrupted every now and then by calling from side to side, and from pool to pool, and by exclamations of sorrow for this misfortune. The search was fruitless: five sheep, pertaining to the flock which he conducted to pasture, were found drowned in one of the deep eddies; but the river was still too brown, from the soil of its moorland sources, to enable them to see what its deep shelves, its pools, and its overhanging and hazelly banks concealed. They remitted further search till the stream should become pure; and old man taking old man aside, began to whisper about the mystery of the youth’s disappearance: old women laid their lips to the ears of their co-evals, and talked of Elphin Irving’s fairy parentage, and his having been dropped by an unearthly hand into a Christian cradle. The young men and maids conversed on other themes; they grieved for the loss of the friend and the lover, and while the former thought that a heart so kind and true was not left in the vale, the latter thought, as maidens will, on his handsome person,

gentle manners, and merry blue eye, and speculated with a sigh on the time when they might have hoped a return for their love. They were soon joined by others who had heard the wild and delirious language of his sister: the old belief was added to the new assurance, and both again commented upon by minds full of superstitious feeling, and hearts full of supernatural fears, till the youths and maidens of Corrievale held no more love trysts for seven days and nights, lest, like Elphin Irving, they should be carried away to augment the ranks of the unchristened chivalry.

It was curious to listen to the speculations of the peasantry. “ For my part,” said a youth, “ if I were sure that poor Elphin escaped from that perilous water, I would not give the fairies a pound of hiplock wool for their chance of him. There has not been a fairy seen in the land since Donald Cargill, the Cameronian, conjured them into the Solway for playing on their pipes during one of his nocturnal preachings on the hip of the Burnswark hill.”

“ Preserve me, bairn,” said an old woman, justly exasperated at the incredulity of her nephew, “ if ye winna believe what I both heard and saw at the moonlight end of Craigybarnwood on a summer night, rank after rank of the fairy folk, ye’ll at least believe a douce man and a ghostly professor, even

the late minister of Tinwaldkirk ; his only son (I mind the lad weel, with his long yellow locks and his bonnie blue eyes, when I was but a gilpie of a lassie), he was stolen away from off the horse at his father's elbow, as they crossed that false and fearsome water, even Locherbriggflow, on the night of the Midsummer Fair of Dumfries. Ay, ay, who can doubt the truth of that? Have not the godly inhabitants of Almsfield-town and Timwaldkirk seen the sweet youth riding at midnight, in the midst of the unhallowed troop, to the sound of flute and of dulcimer ; and though meikle they prayed, naebody tried to achieve his deliverance?"

"I have heard it said, by douce folk and sponsible," interrupted another, "that every seven years the elves and fairies pay kane, or make an offering of one of their children to the grand enemy of salvation, and that they are permitted to purloin one of the children of men to present to the fiend ; a more acceptable offering, I'll warrant, than one of their own infernal brood, that are Satan's sib allies, and drink a drop of the deil's blood every May morning. And touching this lost lad, ye all ken his mother was a hawk of an uncannie nest, a second cousin of Kate Kimmer, of Barfoshan, as rank a witch as ever rode on ragwort. Ay, sirs, what's bred in the bone is ill to come out o' the flesh."

On these and similar topics, which a peasantry full of ancient tradition and enthusiasm and superstition, readily associate with the commonest occurrences of life, the people of Corrievale continued to converse till the fall of evening ; when each seeking their home, renewed again the wondrous subject, and illustrated it with all that popular belief and poetic imagination could so abundantly supply.

The night which followed this melancholy day was wild with wind and rain ; the river came down broader and deeper

than before, and the lightning, flashing by fits over the green woods of Corrie, showed the ungovernable and perilous flood sweeping above its banks. It happened that a farmer, returning from one of the border fairs, encountered the full swing of the storm ; but, mounted on an excellent horse, and mantled from chin to heel in a good gray plaid, beneath which he had the farther security of a thick great-coat, he sat dry in his saddle, and proceeded in the anticipated joy of a subsided tempest, and a glowing morning sun. As he entered the long grove, or rather remains of the old Galwegian forest, which lines for some space the banks of the Corriewater, the storm began to abate, the wind sighed milder and milder among the trees ; and here and there a star, twinkling momentarily through the sudden rack of the clouds, showed the river raging from bank to brae. As he shook the moisture from his clothes, he was not without a wish that the day would dawn, and that he might be preserved on a road which his imagination beset with greater perils than the raging river ; for his superstitious feeling let loose upon his path elf and goblin, and the current traditions of the district supplied very largely to his apprehension the ready materials of fear.

Just as he emerged from the wood, where a fine sloping bank, covered with short green sward, skirts the limit of the forest, his horse made a full pause, snorted, trembled, and started from side to side, stooped his head, erected his ears, and seemed to scrutinize every tree and bush. The rider, too, it may be imagined, gazed round and round, and peered warily into every suspicious-looking place. His dread of a supernatural visitation was not much allayed, when he observed a female shape seated on the ground at the root of a huge old oak tree, which stood in the centre of one of those patches of verdant sward, known by the name of "fairy rings,"

and avoided by all peasants who wish to prosper. A long thin gleam of eastern daylight enabled him to examine accurately the being who, in this wild place and unusual hour, gave additional terror to this haunted spot. She was dressed in white from the neck to the knees; her arms, long, and round, and white, were perfectly bare; her head, uncovered, allowed her long hair to descend in ringlet succeeding ringlet, till the half of her person was nearly concealed in the fleece. Amidst the whole, her hands were constantly busy in shedding aside the tresses which interposed between her steady and uninterrupted gaze, down a line of old road which winded among the hills to an ancient burial-ground.

As the traveller continued to gaze, the figure suddenly rose, and wringing the rain from her long locks, paced round and round the tree, chanting in a wild and melancholy manner an equally wild and delirious song:—

THE FAIRY OAK OF CORRIEWATER.

I.

The small bird's head is under its wing,
The deer sleeps on the grass;
The moon comes out, and the stars shine down,
The dew gleams like the glass:
There is no sound in the world so wide,
Save the sound of the smitten brass,
With the merry cittern and the pipe
Of the fairies as they pass.—
But oh! the fire maun burn and burn,
And the hour is gone, and will never return.

II.

The green hill cleaves, and forth, with a bound,
Come elf and elfin steed;
The moon dives down in a golden cloud,
The stars grow dim with dread;
But a light is running along the earth,
So of heaven's they have no need:
O'er moor and moss with a shout they pass,
And the word is, spur and speed.—
But the fire maun burn, and I maun quake,
And the hour is gone that will never come back.

III.

And when they come to Craigyburn wood,
The Queen of the Fairies spoke:—
“Come, bind your steeds to the rushes so green,
And dance by the haunted oak:

I found the acorn on Heshbon-hill,
In the nook of a palmer's poke,
A thousand years since; here it grows!”
And they danced till the greenwood shook.—
But oh! the fire, the burning fire,
The longer it burns, it but blazes the higher.

IV.

“I have won me a youth,” the Elf-queen said,
“The fairest that earth may see;
This night I have won young Elph Irving,
My cupbearer to be.
His service lasts but for seven sweet years,
And his wage is a kiss of me.”
And merrily, merrily laughed the wild elves,
Round Corrie's greenwood tree.—
But oh! the fire it glows in my brain,
And the hour is gone, and comes not again.

V.

The Queen she has whispered a secret word,
“Come hither, my Elphin sweet,
And bring that cup of the charmèd wine,
Thy lips and mine to weet.”
But a brown elf shouted a loud, loud shout,
“Come, leap on your coursers fleet,
For here comes the smell of some baptized flesh,
And the sounding of baptized feet.”—
But oh! the fire that burns, and maun burn;
For the time that is gone will never return.

VI.

On a steed as white as the new-milked milk,
The Elf-queen leaped with a bound,
And young Elphin a steed like December snow
'Neath him at the word he found.
But a maiden came, and her christened arms
She linked her brother around,
And called on God, and the steed with a snort
Sank into the gaping ground.—
But the fire maun burn, and I maun quake,
And the time that is gone will no more come
back.

VII.

And she held her brother, and lo! he grew
A wild bull waked in ire;
And she held her brother, and lo! he changed
To a river roaring higher;
And she held her brother, and he became
A flood of the raging fire;
She shrieked and sank, and the wild elves
laughed,
Till mountain rang and mire.—
But oh! the fire yet burns in my brain,
And the hour is gone, and comes not again.

VIII.

“Oh, maiden, why waxed thy faith so faint,
Thy spirit so slack and slaw?
Thy courage kept good till the flame waxed
wud,
Then thy might began to thaw,

Had ye kissed him with thy christened lip,
Ye had won him frae 'mang us a'.
Now bless the fire, the elfin fire,
That made thee faint and fa';
Now bless the fire, the elfin fire,
The longer it burns it blazes the higher."

At the close of this unusual strain, the figure sat down on the grass, and proceeded to bind up her long and disordered tresses, gazing along the old and unfrequented road.

"Now God be my helper," said the traveller, who happened to be the Laird of Johnstonebank, "can this be a trick of the fiend, or can it be bonnie Phemie Irving, who chants this dolorous song? Something sad has befallen, that makes her seek her seat in this eerie nook amid the darkness and tempest: through might from abune, I will go on and see."

And the horse, feeling something of the owner's reviving spirit in the application of the spur-steel, bore him at once to the foot of the tree. The poor delirious maiden uttered a piercing yell of joy as she beheld him, and, with the swiftness of a creature winged, linked her arms round the rider's waist, and shrieked till the woods rang.

"Oh, I have ye now, Elphin, I have ye now!" and she strained him to her bosom with a convulsive grasp.

"What ails ye, my bonnie lass?" said the Laird of Johnstonebank, his fears of the supernatural vanishing when he beheld her sad and bewildered look.

She raised her eyes at the sound, and, seeing a strange face, her arms slipped their hold, and she dropped with a groan on the ground.

The morning had now fairly broken: the flocks shook the rain from their sides, the shepherds hastened to inspect their charges, and a thin blue smoke began to stream from the cottages of the valley into the brightening air. The laird carried Phemie Irving in his arms, till he observed two shepherds ascending from one of the loops of Corriewater, bearing the lifeless body of her brother.

They had found him whirling round and round in one of the numerous eddies, and his hands, clutched and filled with wool, showed that he had lost his life in attempting to save the flock of his sister.

A plaid was laid over the body, which, along with the unhappy maiden in a half lifeless state, was carried into a cottage, and laid in that apartment distinguished among the peasantry by the name of "the chamber." While the peasant's wife was left to take care of Phemie, old man, and matron, and maid had collected around the drowned youth, and each began to relate the circumstances of his death, when the door suddenly opened, and his sister, advancing to the corpse with a look of delirious serenity, broke out into a wild laugh, and said,—

"O, it is wonderful, it's truly wonderful! that bare and death-cold body, dragged from the darkest pool of Corrie, with its hands filled with fine wool, wears the perfect similitude of my own Elphin! I'll tell ye—the spiritual dwellers of the earth, the fairyfolk of our evening tale, have stolen the living body, and fashioned this cold and inanimate clod to mislead your pursuit. In common eyes, this seems all that Elphin Irving would be, had he sunk in Corriewater; but so it seems not to me. Ye have sought the living soul, and ye have found only its garment. But oh, if ye had beheld him, as I beheld him to-night, riding among the elfin troop, the fairest of them all; had you clasped him in your arms, and wrestled for him with spirits and terrible shapes from the other world, till your heart quailed and your flesh was subdued, then would ye yield no credit to the semblance which this cold and apparent flesh bears to my brother. But hearken—on Hallowe'en, when the spiritual people are let loose on earth for a season, I will take my stand in the burial-ground of Corrie; and when my Elphin and his unchristened

troop come past with the sound of all their minstrelsy, I will leap on him and win him, or perish for ever."

All gazed aghast on the delirious maiden, and many of her auditors gave more credence to her distempered speech than to the visible evidence before them. As she turned to depart, she looked round, and suddenly sunk upon the body, with tears streaming from her eyes, and sobbed out, "My brother! oh, my brother!" She was carried out insensible, and again recovered; but relapsed into her ordinary delirium, in which she continued till the Hallow-eve after her brother's burial.

She was found seated in the ancient burial-ground, her back against a broken grave-stone, her locks white with frost-rime, watching with intensity of look the road to the kirk-yard; but the spirit which gave life to the fairest form of all the maids of Annandale was fled for ever.

Such is the singular story which the peasants know by the name of Elphin Irving, the Fairies' Cupbearer; and the title, in its fullest and most supernatural sense, still obtains credence among the industrious and virtuous dames of the romantic vale of Corrie.

CHOOSING A MINISTER.

BY JOHN GALT.

THE Rev. Dr Swapkirk having had an apoplexy, the magistrates were obliged to get Mr Pittle to be his helper. Whether it was that, by our being used to Mr Pittle, we had ceased to have a right respect for his parts and talents, or that in reality he was but a weak brother, I cannot in conscience take it on me to say; but the certainty is, that when the Doctor departed this life, there was hardly one of the hearers who thought Mr Pittle would ever be their placed minister, and it was as far at first from the unanimous mind of the magistrates, who are the patrons of the parish, as anything could well be, for he was a man of no smedium in discourse. In verity, as Mrs Pawkie, my wife, said, his sermons in the warm summer afternoons were just a perfect hushabaa, that no mortal could hearken to without sleeping. Moreover, he had a soring way with him, that the genteeler sort couldna abide, for he was for ever going from house to house about tea-time, to save

his ain canister. As for the young ladies, they couldna endure him at all, for he had aye the sough and sound of love in his mouth, and a round-about ceremonial of joking concerning the same, that was just a fasherie to them to hear. The commonality, however, were his greatest adversaries; for he was, notwithstanding the spareness of his abilities, a prideful creature, taking no interest in their hamely affairs, and seldom visiting the aged or the sick among them.

Shortly, however, before the death of the Doctor, Mr Pittle had been very attentive to my wife's full cousin, Miss Lizzie Pinkie,—I'll no say on account of the legacy of seven hundred pounds left her by an uncle, that made his money in foreign parts, and died at Portsmouth of the liver complaint, when he was coming home to enjoy himself; and Mrs Pawkie told me, that as soon as Mr Pittle could get a kirk, I needna be surprised if I heard o' a marriage between him and Miss Lizzie.

Had I been a sordid and interested man, this news could never have given me the satisfaction it did, for Miss Lizzie was very fond of my bairns, and it was thought that Peter would have been her heir ; but so far from being concerned at what I heard, I rejoiced thereat, and resolved in secret thought, whenever a vacancy happened (Dr Swapkirk being then fast wearing away), to exert the best of my ability to get the kirk for Mr Pittie,—not, however, unless he was previously married to Miss Lizzie; for, to speak out, she was beginning to stand in need of a protector, and both me and Mrs Pawkie had our fears that she might outlive her income, and in her old age become a cess upon us. And it couldna be said that this was any groundless fear ; for Miss Lizzie, living a lonely maiden life by herself, with only a bit lassie to run her errands, and no being naturally of an active or eydent turn, aften wearied, and to keep up her spirits, gaed, maybe, now and then, oftener to the gardevin than was just necessar, by which, as we thought, she had a tavert look. Howsoever, as Mr Pittie had taken a notion of her, and she pleased his fancy, it was far from our hand to misliken one that was sib to us ; on the contrary, it was a duty laid on me by the ties of blood and relationship to do all in my power to further their mutual affection into matrimonial fruition ; and what I did towards that end is the burden of this narrative.

Dr Swapkirk, in whom the spark of life was long fading, closed his eyes, and it went utterly out, as to this world, on a Saturday night, between the hours of eleven and twelve. We had that afternoon got an inkling that he was drawing near to his end. At the latest, Mrs Pawkie herself went over to the manse, and stayed till she saw him die. “ It was a pleasant end,” she said, for he was a godly, patient man ; and we were both sorely grieved, though it was a thing for which we had been long pre-

pared, and, indeed, to his family and connections, except for the loss of the stipend, it was a very gentle dispensation, for he had been long a heavy handful, having been for years but, as it were, a breathing lump of mortality, groosy and oozy, and doozy, his faculties being shut up and locked in by a dumb palsy.

Having had this early intimation of the Doctor’s removal to a better world. on the Sabbath morning when I went to join the magistrates in the council-chamber, as the usage is, to go to the laft, with the town-officers carrying their halberts before us, according to the ancient custom of all royal burghs, my mind was in a degree prepared to speak to them anent the successor. Little, however, passed at that time, and it so happened that, by some wonder of inspiration (there were, however, folk that said it was taken out of a book of sermons, by one Barrow, an English divine), Mr Pittie that forenoon preached a discourse that made an impression, insomuch that, on our way back to the council-chamber, I said to Provost Vintner that then was—

“ Really, Mr Pittie seems, if he would exert himself, to have a nerve. I could not have thought it was in the power of his capacity to have given us such a sermon.”

The provost thought as I did ; so I replied—

“ We canna, I think, do better than keep him among us. It would, indeed, provost, no be doing justice to the young man to pass another over his head.”

I could see that the provost wasna quite sure of what I had been saying ; for he replied, that it was a matter that needed consideration.

When we separated at the council-chamber, I threw myself in the way of Bailie Weezle, and walked home with him, our talk being on the subject of the vacancy ; and I rehearsed to him what had passed between me and the provost, saying, that the provost had

made no objection to prefer Mr Pittle, which was the truth.

Bailie Weezle was a man no overladen with worldly wisdom, and had been chosen into the council principally on account of being easily managed. In his business, he was originally by trade a baker in Glasgow, where he made a little money, and came to settle among us with his wife, who was a native of the town, and had her relations here. Being, therefore, an idle man, living on his money, and of a soft and quiet nature, he was, for the reason aforesaid, chosen into the council, where he always voted on the provost's side ; for in controverted questions every one is beholden to take a part, and he thought it his duty to side with the chief magistrate.

Having convinced the bailie that Mr Pittle had already, as it were, a sort of infeoffment in the kirk, I called in the evening on my old predecessor in the guildry, Bailie M'Lucre, who was not a hand to be so easily dealt with ; but I knew his inclinations, and therefore I resolved to go roundly to work with him. So I asked him out to take a walk, and I led him towards the town-moor, conversing loosely about one thing and another, and touching softly here and there on the vacancy.

When we were well on into the middle of the moor, I stopped, and, looking round me, said,—

“Bailie, surely it's a great neglec' of the magistrates and council to let this braw broad piece of land, so near the town, lie in a state o' nature, and giving pasturage to only twa-three of the poor folks' cows. I wonder you, that's now a rich man, and with een worth pearls and diamonds,—that ye dinna think of asking a tack of this land ; ye might make a great thing o't.”

The fish nibbled, and told me that he had for some time entertained a thought on the subject ; but he was afraid that I would be over extortionate.

“I wonder to hear you, bailie,” said I ; “I trust and hope no one will ever find me out of the way of justice ; and to convince you that I can do a friendly turn, I'll no objec' to gie you a' my influence free gratis, if ye'll gie Mr Pittle a lift into the kirk ; for, to be plain with you, the worthy young man, who, as ye heard to-day, is no without an ability, has long been fond of Mrs Pawkie's cousin, Miss Lizzie Pinkie ; and I would fain do all that lies in my power to help on the match.

The bailie was well pleased with my frankness, and before returning home, we came to a satisfactory understanding ; so that the next thing I had to do was to see Mr Pittle himself on the subject. Accordingly, in the gloaming, I went over to where he stayed : it was with Miss Jenny Killfuddy, an elderly maiden lady, whose father was the minister of Braehill, and the same that is spoken of in the chronicle of Dalmailing, as having had his eye almost put out by a clash of glaur, at the stormy placing of Mr Balwhidder.

“Mr Pittle,” said I, as soon as I was in, and the door closed, “I'm come to you as a friend. Both Mrs Pawkie and me have long discerned that ye have had a look more than common towards our friend Miss Lizzie, and we think it our duty to inquire your intents, before matters gang to greater length.”

He looked a little dumfoundered at this salutation, and was at a loss for an answer ; so I continued—

“If your designs be honourable, and no doubt they are, now's your time ;—strike while the iron's hot. By the death of the Doctor, the kirk's vacant, the town-council have the patronage ; and if ye marry Miss Lizzie, my interest and influence shall not be slack in helping you into the poopit.”

In short, out of what passed that night, on the Monday following, Mr Pittle and Miss Lizzie were married ; and by my dexterity, together with the able

help I had in Bailie M'Lucre, he was in due season placed and settled in the parish; and the next year, more than fifty acres of the town-moor were inclosed, on a nine hundred and ninety-nine years' tack, at an easy rate, between me and the bailie, he paying the half of the expense of the ditching and rooting out of the whins; and it was acknowledged, by every one that saw it, that there had not been a greater improvement for many years in all the country-

side. But to the best actions there will be adverse and discontented spirits; and, on this occasion, there were not wanting persons naturally of a disloyal opposition temper, who complained of the inclosure as a usurpation of the rights and property of the poorer burghers. Such revilings, however, are what all persons in authority must suffer; and they had only the effect of making me button my coat, and look out the crooser to the blast.—“*The Provost.*”

THE MEAL MOB.

DURING the winter of 18—, there was a great scarcity of grain in the western districts of Scotland. The expediency of the corn laws was then hotly discussed, but the keen hunger of wives and children went further to embitter the spirits of the lower orders. The abstract question was grasped at as a vent for ill-humour, or despairingly, as a last chance for preservation. As usual, exaggerated reports were caught up and circulated by the hungry operatives, of immense prices demanded by grain-merchants and farmers, and of great stores of grain garnered up for exportation. As a natural consequence of all these circumstances, serious disturbances took place in more than one burgh.

The town of —, in which I then resided, had hitherto been spared, but a riot was, in the temper of the poor, daily to be expected. Numbers of special constables were sworn in. The commander of the military party then in the barracks was warned to hold himself in readiness. Such members of the county yeomanry corps as resided in or near the town were requested to lend their aid, if need should be.

I was sitting comfortably by my fireside, one dark, cold evening, conversing

with a friend over a tumbler of toddy, when we were both summoned to officiate in our capacity of constables. The poor fellows who fell at Waterloo sprang from their hard, curtainless beds with less reluctance. We lingered rather longer than decency allowed of, buttoning our greatcoats and adjusting our comforters. At last, casting a piteous look at the fire, which was just beginning to burn up gloriously, we pressed our hats deeper over our eyes, grasped our batons, and sallied forth.

The mischief had begun in the mills at the town-head, and as the parties employed in the mob went to work with less reluctance than we had done, the premises were fairly gutted, and the plunderers, (or, more properly speaking, devastators) on their way to another scene of action, before a sufficient *posse* of our body could be mustered. We encountered the horde coming down the main street. The advanced guard consisted of an immense swarm of little ragged boys, running scatteredly with stones in their hands and bonnets. These were flanked and followed by a number of dirty, draggle-tailed drabs, most of them with children in their arms. Upon them followed a dense mass of men of all ages, many of them in the garb of

sailors, for the tars had learned that the soldiery were likely to be employed against the people, and there is a standing feud between the "salt-waters" and the "lobsters." There was also a vague and ill-regulated sympathy for the suffering they saw around them, working at the bottom. All this array we half saw, half conjectured, by the dim light of the dirty street lamps. The body was silent, but for the incessant patterning of their feet as they moved along.

The word was given to clear the street, and we advanced with right ill-will upon them. The first ranks gave back, but there arose immediately a universal and deafening hooting, groaning, yelling, and whistling. The shrill and angry voices of women were heard above all, mingled with the wailing of their terrified babes. "We maun hae meat;" "Fell the gentle bouchers;" "Belay there! spank him with your pole;" resounded on every side, in the screaming tones of women, and the deep voices of sailors, garnished and enforced with oaths too dreadful to mention. Nor was this all: a shower of stones came whizzing past our ears from the boy-tirailleurs mentioned above, levelling some of our companions, jingling among the windows, and extinguishing the lamps. Some of the boldest of the men next attempted to wrest the batons from the constables who stood near them. In this they were assisted by the women, who crushed into our ranks, and prevented us giving our cudgels free play. The stones continued to fly in all directions, hitting the rioters as often as the preservers of the peace. The parties tugged and pulled at each other most stubbornly, while the screams of pain and anger, the yell of triumph, and hoarse execrations, waxed momentarily louder and more terrific.

At last the constables were driven back, with the loss of all their batons and most of their best men. The mob

rushed onward with a triumphant hurrah, and turned down a side street leading to a granary, in which they believed a great quantity of grain was stored up. The proprietor's house stood beside it. A volley of stones was discharged against the latter, which shattered every window in the house, and the missiles were followed by a thunder-growl of maledictions, which made the hair of the innocent inmates stand on their heads, and their hearts die within them. The crowd stood irresolute for a moment. A tall athletic sailor advanced to the door of the granary. "Have you never a marlin-spike to bouse open the hatchway here?" A crowbar was handed to him. "A glim! a glim!" cried voices from different parts of the crowd. It was now for the first time discovered that some of the party had provided themselves with torches, for after a few minutes' fumbling a light was struck, and immediately the pitch brands cast a lurid light over the scene. The state of the corn merchant's family must now have been dreadful. The multitude stood hushed as death, or as the coming thunderstorm. All this time the sailor of whom I have spoken had been prising away with his bar at the granary door.

At this moment a heavy-measured tread was heard indistinctly in the distance. It drew nearer, and became more distinct. Some respectable burghers, who had assembled, and stood aloof gazing on the scene, now edged closer to the crowd, and addressed the nearest women in a low voice: "Yon's the sodgers." The hint was taken, for, one by one, the women gathered their infants closer in their arms, and dropped off. First one and then another pale-faced, consumptive-looking weaver followed their example in silence. The trampling now sounded close at hand, and its measured note was awful in the hush of the dark night. The panic now spread to the boys, who flew asunder

on all sides—like a parcel of carion flies when disturbed by a passenger—squalling, “Yon’s the sodgers!” So effectual was the dispersion that ensued, that when the soldiers defiled into the wider space before the granary, no one remained except the door-breaker, and one or two of the torch-holders.

The latter threw down their brands and scampered. The lights were snatched up before they were extinguished, by some of the boldest constables. Of all the rioters only one remained—the tall sailor, who may be termed their ringleader. The foremost rank of the soldiers was nearly up to him, and others were defiling from behind to intercept him should he attempt to reach the side streets. He

stood still, watchful as a wild beast when surrounded by hunters, but with an easy roll of his body, and a good-humoured smile upon his face. “Yield, Robert Jones,” cried the provost, who feared he might meditate a desperate and unavailing resistance. But instead of answering, Robert sprung upon a soldier who was forming into line at his right side, struck up the man’s musket, twisted off the bayonet, and making it shine through the air in the torchlight like a rocket, tripped up his heels. “Not yet, lobster!” he exclaimed, as the bayonet of the fallen hero’s left-hand man glanced innocuously past him, so saying, the sailor rapidly disappeared down a dark lane.—*Edinburgh Literary Journal.*

THE FLITTING.

IT was on the day before the flitting, or removal, that John Armour’s farm-stock, and indeed everything he had, excepting as much as might furnish a small cottage, was to be rouped to meet his debts. No doubt it was a heart-rending scene to all the family, though his wife considered all their losses light, when compared with her husband’s peace of mind. The great bustle of the sale, however, denied him the leisure which a just view of his condition made most to be dreaded; so that it was not till late in the evening, when all was quiet again,—his cherished possessions removed, and time allowed him to brood over his state,—that the deep feelings of vexation and despair laid hold of his spirit.

The evening was one of remarkable beauty; the birds never more rapturous, the grass never greener around the farm-house. The turf seat on which old Hugh was wont to

rest, in the corner of the little garden, was white with gowans; the willows and honeysuckles that overarched it all full of life; the air was bland, the cushat’s distant cooing very plaintive;—all but the inhabitants of the humble dwelling was tranquil and delighted. But they were downcast; each one pursued some necessary preparation for tomorrow’s great change, saying little, but deeply occupied with sad thoughts. Once the wife ejaculated—

“Oh, that the morn was ower!”

“Yes,” said her husband, “the morn, and every morn o’ them!—but I wish this gloaming had been stormy.”

He could not settle—he could not eat—he avoided conversation; and, with his hat drawn over his brow, he traversed wearily the same paths, and did over and over again the same things. It was near bedtime, when one of the children said to her mother—

“My faither’s stan’in’ at the corner

o' the stable, and didna speak to me when I spak to him ;—gang out, mother, and bring him in."

" If he wad but speak to me !" was the mother's answer. She went out,—the case had become extreme,—and she ventured to argue with and reprove him.

" Ye do wrang, John—this is no like yoursel ;—the world's fu' of affliction—ithers ken that as weel as you—ye maunna hae a' things your ain way : there's Ane abune us wha has said, ' In sorrow shalt thou eat thy bread all the days of thy life.' Ye canna expect to gang free ; and I maun say it wadna be guude for ony o' us. Maybe greater ills are yet to befa' ye, and then ye'll rue sair that ye hae gien way at this time ; come in, John, wi' me ; time will wear a' this out o' mind."

He struck his hand against his brow—he grasped at his neckcloth—and after choking on a few syllables which he could not utter, tears gushed from his eyes, and he melted in a long heart-rending fit of weeping. Oh, it is a sorrowful thing to see a strong hard-featured man shedding tears ! His sobs are so heavy, his wail so full-toned ! John Armour, perhaps for twenty years a stranger to weeping, had now to burst the sealed sluices of manhood's grief, which nothing but the resistless struggle of agony could accomplish, ere relief could reach his labouring breast. Now it was he sought the dearest sanctuary on earth—he leaned upon his wife's bosom, and she lavished on him the riches of a woman's love. At length he went to rest, gentler in spirit, and borne down by a less frightful woe than what had lately oppressed him.

Next morning brought round the bustle of flitting. There is a deep interest attending a scene of this kind, altogether separate from the feelings of those who have to leave a favourite abode. Circumstances of antiquity—of mystery—belong to it. The demolition even of an old house has something

melancholy ; the dismantling it of furniture is not less affecting. Some of the servants that had been at one time about the farm assisted on this occasion, and entered fully into the sentiments now described.

" That press has been there, I'll warran', this fifty years ; it was his mother's, and cam on her blithe marriage-day ; the like o't ye'll no see now-a-days—it's fresh yet. Few hae seen the back o' thee, I trow, these twa days, but the wabsters and sclaters ; they winna ken what to mak o' this wark ; let me look into the back o't."

" I wad be a wee eerie," said another, feeling the gloomy appearance of the old empty dwelling suggest thoughts allied to superstition, " about ganging into that toom house at night ; I wad aye be thinkin' o' meeting wi' auld Hugh, honest man."

The flitting set off to a cottage about two miles distant ; two cart loads of furniture, one milk cow, and the old watch-dog, were its amount. John Armour lingered a little behind, as did his wife, for she was unwilling to leave him there alone. He then proceeded to every part of the premises. The barn and stable kept him a few moments ; the rest he hurried over, excepting the kitchen and spence. When he came to the kitchen (for it was the apartment he visited last), he leant his head for an instant against the mantelpiece, and fixed his eyes on the hearth-stone. A deep sigh escaped him, and his wife then took him by the hand to lead him away, which he resisted not, only saying,—

" I hae mind o' mony a thing that happened here ;"—then casting his eyes hastily round the desolate apartment,— " but fareweel to thee for ever !" In a few minutes they overtook the flitting, nor did he once turn again his head towards the desolate place which had so firm a hold of his heart.—" *My Grandfather's Farm.*"

EWEN OF THE LITTLE HEAD:

A LEGEND OF THE WESTERN ISLES.

ABOUT three hundred years ago, Ewen Maclean of Lochbuy, in the island of Mull, having been engaged in a quarrel with a neighbouring chief, a day was fixed for determining the affair by the sword. Lochbuy, before the day arrived, consulted a celebrated witch as to the result of the feud. The witch declared, that if Lochbuy's wife should on the morning of that day give him and his men food unasked, he would be victorious ; but if not, the result would be the reverse. This was a disheartening response for the unhappy votary, his wife being a noted shrew.

The fatal morning arrived, and the hour for meeting the enemy approached ; but there appeared no symptoms of refreshment for Lochbuy and his men. At length the unfortunate man was compelled to ask his wife to supply them with food. She set down before them curds, but without spoons. The men ate the curds as well as they could with their hands ; but Lochbuy himself ate none. After behaving with the greatest bravery in the bloody conflict which ensued, he fell covered with wounds, leaving his wife to the execration of his people.

But the miseries brought on the luckless chief by his sordid and shrewish spouse did not end with his life, for he died fasting ; and his ghost is frequently seen to this day riding the very horse on which he was mounted when he was killed. It was a small, but very neat and active pony, dun or mouse coloured, to which Lochbuy was much attached, and on which he had ridden for many years before his death. His appearance is as accurately described in the island

of Mull as any steed is in Newmarket. The prints of his shoes are discerned by connoisseurs, and the rattling of his curb is recognized in the darkest night. He is not particular in regard to roads, for he goes up hill and down dale with equal velocity. His hard-fated rider still wears the same green cloak which covered him in his last battle ; and he is particularly distinguished by the small size of his head.

It is now above three hundred years since Ewen-a-Chin-Vig (*Anglice, "Hugh of the Little Head"*) fell in the field of honour ; but neither the vigour of the horse nor of the rider is yet diminished. His mournful duty has always been to attend the dying moments of every member of his own numerous tribe, and to escort the departed spirit on its long and arduous journey.

Some years ago, he accosted one of his own people (indeed, he has never been known to notice any other), and shaking him cordially by the hand, he attempted to place him on the saddle behind himself, but the uncourteous dog declined the honour. Ewen struggled hard, but the clown was a great strong, clumsy fellow, and stuck to the earth with all his might. He candidly acknowledged, however, that his chief would have prevailed, had it not been for a birch tree which stood by, and which he got within the fold of his left arm. The contest became then very warm indeed. At length, however, Ewen lost his seat for the first time ; and the instant the pony found he was his own master, he set off with the fleetness of lightning. Ewen immediately pursued his steed, and the wearied rustic sped his way homeward.—*Lit. Gazette.*

BASIL ROLLAND.

CHAPTER I.

In May, quhen men yied everichone
 With Robene Hoid and Littil John,
 To bring in bowis and birken bobbyns,
 Now all sic game is fastlings gone,
 Bot gif if be amangs clown Robbynis.—*A. Scott.*

THE period at which the circumstances recorded in the following narrative happened was in the troubled year of 1639. At that time the points in dispute betwixt Charles and his subjects were most violently contested, and the partizans of each were in arms all over the country, endeavouring, by partial and solitary operations, to gain the ascendancy for their faction. The first cause of these disturbances was the attempt of the monarch to establish Episcopacy over Scotland—a form of worship which had always been disliked by the Scotch, as they considered it but a single step removed from Popery. The intemperate zeal with which Charles prosecuted his views (occasioned by a misconception of the national character of his subjects), and his averseness to compromise or conciliation, first gave rise to the combination called the Covenanters; weak at first, but in a short time too powerful to be shaken by the exertions of the High Churchmen.

One of the first and most politic steps taken by the Council of the Covenant, denominated “the Tables,” was the framing of the celebrated Bond or Covenant; the subscribers of which bound themselves to resist the introduction of Popery and Prelacy, and to stand by each other in case of innovations on the established worship. Charles seeing, at last, the strength of this association, uttered, in his turn, a covenant renouncing Popery; he also dispensed with the use of the Prayer Book, the Five Articles of Perth, and

other things connected with public worship which were obnoxious to the Covenanters.

During this contention, the citizens of Aberdeen remained firmly attached to the royal interest, and appear to have come in with every resolution that was adopted by the government. In 1638, a deputation from “the Tables,” among whom was the celebrated Andrew Cant (from whom the mission was denominated “Cant’s Visitation”), arrived in the town, for the purpose of inducing the inhabitants to subscribe the Covenant; but as their representations entirely failed of success, they were obliged to desist. The Earl of Montrose arrived in Aberdeen in the spring of 1639, and, partly by the terror of his arms, partly by the representations of the clergy that accompanied him, succeeded in imposing the Covenant on the townsmen. After his departure, a body of the royalists, commanded by the Laird of Banff, having routed the forces of Frazer and Forbes, took possession of the town, and wreaked their vengeance on all who had subscribed the Covenant. They only remained five days in the town, and, on their departure, it was occupied by the Earl of Marischal, who in turn harassed the royalists. As soon as Montrose heard of these occurrences, being doubtful of the fidelity of the inhabitants, he marched to Aberdeen again, disarmed the citizens, and imposed a heavy fine upon them. The citizens, who had been impoverished by these unjust

exactions, were somewhat relieved, when Montrose, their greatest scourge, after another short visit, marched into Angus and disbanded his army.

It was in the month of June that the citizens began to feel themselves elated by the prospect, if not of peace, of the seat of the war being removed from their dwellings, on the disbanding of Montrose's forces, and at liberty to say anything about the Covenant that might seem good unto them. Those who had subscribed it under the influence of fear (and they were not a small number) veered round to the king's party, and sounded the praises of the Viscount of Aboyne, who had landed at Aberdeen on the part of his Majesty. Their former losses and sufferings were all forgotten, and a general disposition for rejoicing was to be seen among them. Provost Leslie and his colleagues were inclined to encourage this, as it might lead those who had a hankering after the Covenant to turn to the loyal side, which allowed them greater latitude in their games and plays. It was therefore announced that, in the ensuing week, the pastime of Robin Hood and Little John (which had not been celebrated in the beginning of May, the usual time, on account of the disturbances) should be practised on the playfield, along with the usual helps to merriment.

Of all the crowds that poured out from the town on that day to see the spectacle, it is our business only to take notice of a young man and maiden that tripped along just as it was commencing. They appeared to be of the first order of the citizens. The maiden was a lively, interesting little girl, with blue eyes and a fine complexion; her limbs moulded into the most exact symmetry, and her whole appearance in the utmost degree fascinating. Her dress was white, with a sort of scarf or plaid wound round her person, and fastened by a loop and silver button on the left shoulder. Her flaxen hair, except a few ringlets

which strayed down her neck, was confined by a silken snood, which, even at that period, was the badge of Scottish maidens. Her companion was above the middle size, of rather a slender make and ruddy complexion, with expressive dark eyes, and coal black hair flowing down, according to the fashion of the royalists, in large and glossy curls. He was about twenty years of age, and though his figure was somewhat boyish,—or feminine if you will,—yet the fire of his eye, the intelligence of his countenance, and the activity of his frame, confirmed his claims to manhood. Although the young man intended only to be a spectator of the revels, he was dressed in green, with bow and arrows, which was the dress of the actors of the play.

As they approached the playfield, now called Gilcomston, the shouts of the delighted populace were heard, mingled with the sounds of the pipe, fiddle, and trumpet, the songs of the minstrels, and the cries of the jugglers. The Abbot and Prior of Bon-Accord (or, as they were called after the Reformation, Robin Hood and Little John) had just arrived; and having been greeted by the populace, were forming a ring for the celebration of the sports, which was guarded by a body of their archers. We have no need to detail the performance; suffice it to say, that the piece was intended for a satire on the Covenanters, they being shown to the lieges under the semblance of evil spirits, and the royalists of angels of light. Towards the close of it, the young man whom we have mentioned felt his sleeve pulled by a person behind him.

"Thou art he whom I seek," said the person who thus forced himself on his notice; "and thy name is Basil Rolland."

"It is," returned he; "declare your business."

"Not here. Thou seest we are surrounded by the multitude. Remove

with me to a little distance, for I would hold some secret converse with thee."

"That may not be. I came to squire this maiden to the revels, and may not leave her alone."

"Suffer the damsel to tarry here for a short space, and follow me to a little distance."

"Go with the stranger, Basil," said she, "and I will remain in the same spot till you return."

"Do so then, Mary," said Basil; "I'll return anon."

As they retired to some distance from the crowd, Basil had leisure to note the appearance of the stranger. From his dress little could be learned; it was in the extremity of plainness. He had been a man of uncommon muscular strength, but it seemed much decayed, perhaps from the struggles of an active life. His eyes were sunk, but retained their lustre; and premature furrows were on his brow. When he halted, Basil addressed him:

"Will it please you then, sir, to communicate your tidings?"

"Then I ask thee, Basil Rolland, what dost thou here?"

"Why, grave sir, I'll answer thy question with another," said Basil, laughing at this solemn opening of the conference: "what dost *thou* here?"

"My gray hairs, young man, are a testimony unto thee that I come not here on any light matter."

"Why then, my foolish face may be a testimony to thee of the lightness of the cause that brought me hither. Marry! we have at last got rid of Montrose and his prickearead gang, wherefore we may be allowed to enjoy ourselves on the prospect of peace,"

"Enjoy thyself!" said he. "And what enjoyment canst thou gain from these absurd and impious mummeries? They are a sacrifice to the evil one; a bloody engine of Prelacy to betray the unthinking soul. Peace! What have ye to do with peace? Have not thy

friends been treacherous as a snare, and unstable as water? Hath not the finger of Heaven written bitter things against them for their guile and deceit? Have not their enemies trampled them under foot, and they in whom they trusted been as a scourge and as a snare unto them? Have they not been lukewarm in the good cause, regarding the favour of men more than the will of God? Are they not even now triumphing at the hurt of Israel, and rejoicing that the pure evangel has been withdrawn from them? Let them lean on those whom they have chosen, and well shall it be for them if they can protect them against the just wrath of the godly."

"Your words are dark and threatening, old man, but to me they appear as the ravings of a feverish dreamer. You seem to tell me of some danger hanging over us; but our enemy's forces are disbanded, and in my judgment there is nothing to fear. The town is fortified: Aboyne, with a strong army, possesses it. So away with these fancies; and if you have aught to say that concerns me particularly, say on, for I must return to my sister."

"Thy sister? Well, Mary Leslie may deserve the name. I am thy friend, wherefore I am so thou shalt quickly know. Ponder well what I have said. Remember that the calm often precedes the storm, and that it is better to take part with the faithful, even in adversity, than to be the friend of covenant-breaking, soul-seducing prelatists. I will see thee to-morrow at the booth of Samuel Fairtext at eventide. Meet me there, and it shall be for thy good. Farewell, mayst thou be partaker of all covenant blessings."

So saying, he walked off, and in a short time was lost among the crowd, leaving Basil at a loss what to make of his insinuations. When he came up with Mary Leslie, the Skinners, who represented the royalists, had succeeded in driving the Litsters, who represented

the Covenanters, into a smoky den or booth, which, in a moment after, took fire, while the whole angelic train joined in a song to the praise of the Viscount of Aboyne.

He remarked, however, that the spectators were now very inattentive to the sports. They were drawn together into small knots, all over the field, in earnest conversation, which, as it became more general, entirely drowned the iron voices of the performing cherubs. The spectators began to leave the field in great numbers. Robin Hood's body-guard even followed their example, and Little John, by the same inexplicable spirit of discontent, deserted his friend and leader. The whisper (as it was at first) was not long in extending to the spot where Basil and Mary were standing. The cause of the disturbance may be gathered from the following conversation :—

"Now, the like o' this I never saw," said Thomas Chalmers, deacon of the fleshers. "That deil's buckie Montrose is to the road again, an' comin' wi' thousands upon thousands to the town. Fient a hoof mair will I get killed till we be clear o' him."

"Weel, weel," said Jamie Jingle, the bellman, "it's a gude thing it's nae waur. Come wha like, they'll aye need a bellman."

"Nae waur, ye clappertongue!" said another. "I wad like to ken what waur could come? Willna a' thing we hae be spulzied by thae rascals,—black be their cast!—an' wunna there be

anither speel at the Covenant, whilk we hae a' ta'en an' una'en about half-a-dozen o' times already?"

"Ye're vera right, Saunders," said the chief of the tanners; "but for a' that, Aboyne may gie him his kail through the reek; and, if the news be true, there will be a great demand for shoon and belts, whilk sud be a source o' comfort, ye ken."

"What hae I to do wi' your belts an' your brogues, Benjie Barkhide? What hae I to do wi' them, I say? A murrain on the Covenanters, say I, and a' that pertains to them."

"A curse on the Covenanters an' prelatemongers baith, conjunctly and severally!" said another citizen. "I wish the deil would snite his nose with the hale clanjamphry, though he sud get me to the bet o' the bargain, for wishing them sae."

"Wha would hae thought o' this in the morning?" said Barkhide. "Weel, lads, I think we sud a' gae hame, an' put as mony o' our bits o' things out o' the way as we can."

They departed, and this sentiment becoming general, in a short time the playfield was emptied of the revellers.

As Mary and Basil moved homewards with the rest, the latter evaded the questions put to him concerning the stranger. He saw, however, a coincidence between his darkly expressed hints and the events of the day; and while he resolved for the present to keep this secret, he anxiously wished for the promised interview.

CHAPTER II.

The red cross glares on Frazer's towers,
 My love, I dare not stay;
 The bugle peals through Lovat's bowers,
 My love, I must away.—*Old Ballad.*

WE shall now conduct the reader to a shop in the Broadgate, over which appeared in ancient characters,—

Patrick Leslie & Samuel Fairtext.

It is not to be supposed that the street had the same appearance which it now exhibits ; neither are the unsophisticated to imagine that the shops resembled those of our own times, with lofty roofs, gigantic windows, mahogany counters, splendid chandeliers, and elegant gas burners. The windows were not much larger than the loop-holes of a modern prison ; the roof was low and covered with cobwebs, and the goods exposed for sale were all lying at sixes and sevens. The forepart of the shop extended about ten feet forward into the street, and was decorated on the outside with swatches of the various commodities that were to be sold within. In the back shop, which was nearly as dark as midnight, were deposited the whole of the goods, except the specimens just mentioned. In the inmost recess of these penetralia, was Provost Leslie, with three or four stout fellows, removing, under his command, the goods in the back shop or warehouse.

“ Saunders,” said the provost, “ ye'll tak awa yon silks an' velvets, and put them into the vault i' the dryest—ay, that's another flask broken, ye careless gowk ! I'll set ye about your business gin ye wunna tak mair tent. As soon's you get that barrel awa, ye'll tak down the Prayer-Books from that shelf, and put up twa or three dozen o' Confessions o' Faith. An', my little man, ye'll run up to my lasses, and tell them to leave a' their wark an' come down

to grease the sword blades, for fear that they rust in the cellar, an' syne tell the same to Sammy Fairtext's maidens, an' bring them a' wi' you as fast's ye can.—Ay, Basil, are ye there? Troth, gentle or semple, ye maun help's the day. You are a canny lad, sae try if ye can collect a' the trinkets and the siller cups and spoons, and take them up by to my chamber.—Ye ne'er-do-wel ! ye haverel, Sandie Hackit, what garred you spill the wine on that web ? Ye needna mind it now, ye sorrow ; it's nae worth puttin' out o' Montrose's way.”

When Basil Rolland returned from executing his commission, the stranger whom he had seen on the former day was in the shop, engaged in conversation with Fairtext. The latter bade Basil conduct him to his house, whether he himself would follow when he had dispatched some necessary business. When they were seated, the stranger began—

“ Thou hast seen, youth, that the things which I hinted to thee are in part come to pass. The city is in confusion, the men of war are discouraged, so that they will assuredly be a prey, and a spoil, and a derision to their adversaries. What dost thou now intend ? ”

“ What but to join the army of Aboyne, and do battle with my best blood against these murdering rebels.”

“ And what would be thy reward, young man ? Thy good sense tells thee that it is wrong to deprive free-born men of liberty of conscience. You would fight for your own slavery. Charles is one who regardeth not cove-

nants. He will reward jugglers and lewd ones, rather than those who have shed their blood for his wicked house. But he already totters on his throne, and the day may not be distant when he himself shall cry for mercy from those whose fathers, mothers, and children he hath slain. If you are vanquished in the approaching contest, all with you is lost ; if successful, you are nothing the better, except for upholding a Papistical hierarchy, the raw project of a godless debauchee. Thy grandfather did battle on the wrong side, and, after his fall at the battle of Pinkie, the family fell from its former power, which it has never been able to regain."

"Let me ask what comfort or reward could I expect by deserting my friends? The Covenanters have renounced their oath of allegiance, and have imbrued their hands in their countrymen's blood. Good can never follow an enterprise begun by perjury, and continued with carnage."

"And did not Charles first deliberately break his oath and the covenant made with the people? The paction was therefore nullified by him, and could not bind the other party. If they have shed blood, their blood has been shed ; and it was not till every attempt at pacification failed that they took up the carnal weapon. And, for comfort, I have long supported this cause, and I can look back with greater pleasure to my conduct in this respect than thou canst on the picture of thy lady love which even now is peeping from thy bosom."

"It is my mother's picture," said Basil, blushing to the eyes.

"Thy mother's!" said the stranger, while, with an emotion which he had not yet exhibited, he caught at the picture with such violence as to break the silken riband with which it was suspended, and, unconscious of Basil's presence, riveted his eyes upon it, scanning the features with the greatest eagerness.

"The same, the same," said he to himself ; "the arched brow and the feeling eye, the smiling lips and the rosy cheek. But where is the principle that gave these their value? Where is the life, the soul?" continued he, kissing the senseless painting. "How inferior was this once to thy beauty, and how superior now to thy mouldering ashes! Didst thou appear as the ideal charmer of a flitting dream, or wert thou indeed the pride of my youth, the light of my eyes, and the mistress of my heart? Thou wert ! thou wert ! my sorrows tell it—Preserve this picture, young man. Thou never, alas ! knewest a mother's love—or a father's affection : the former flame was rudely quenched, the latter burned unknown to thee."

"Then you knew my mother?"

"Ay, Basil, I knew her. We ran together in infancy, we danced together on the braes of Don, and wove each other garlands of the wild-flowers that grew on its banks. Then we thought this world was as heaven, while we were as innocent as angels. As we grew up, the sun, the wood, the rock, was our temple, where we admired the beauteous novelty of this earth. All was love, and peace, and joy ; but sorrow came, and those sweet dreams have vanished."

During these unexpected communications, Basil felt himself strangely agitated. The old man seemed to know his history, and with a mixture of doubt and anxiety he inquired if he knew his father.

"I am thy father," said the stranger, weeping, and throwing himself into his arms ; "I am thy parent, thy joyous, sorrowing parent. How often have I wished for this day ! It is now come, and thou art all that I could wish—except in one thing, and that is not thy fault. I have claimed thee at a time when the boy must act the man, and take part boldly in the great struggle.

We must depart from this place to-night. The citizens, thou knowest, are summoned to join the royalists under pain of death, so that we may be delayed if we tarry longer."

"But whither, my father, shall we go?" said Basil.

"Where but to the persecuted remnant that are even now struggling for freedom. We will fight under the banner of the Covenant."

"I have now found a father," said Basil, "and his commands I must and will obey; but you will not bid me lift the sword when every stroke must fall upon an acquaintance or a schoolmate?"

Isaac Rolland then began to mention to his son the reasons which induced him to join this party. He had no more of enthusiasm than it becomes one to have who knows he is embarked in a good cause. He mentioned his own early history, which we shall blend with that of his son. He had been one of the mission, headed by Sir Thomas Menzies, that visited King James in 1620 on civil business. About eighteen months before, he had lost a loving and beloved wife, with whom he had been acquainted from early infancy. She died on the birth of Basil. After this affliction, Isaac Rolland could find no pleasure in the place of his nativity, where everything reminded him of some dear departed joy; wherefore, having interest to obtain a situation at court, he left his only son Basil under the guardianship of his friend Fairtext, and contented himself by hearing often about him, without ever visiting him till the time at which this story commences. Rolland was acquainted partially with the circumstances of his birth. He knew that his mother died when she gave him life; he knew also that his father existed, but nothing farther. Isaac laid before his son, in a clear and methodic manner, the reasons for which the Covenanters took up arms, the reason-

ableness of their demands, and the tyranny of their enemies. He neither palliated nor denied the excesses of either party, but contended that these should teach all to use their superiority mercifully. The forcible point of view in which he set his arguments wrought instant conviction in Basil's mind, which his father observing,—

"Come, then," said he, "and let us prepare for this struggle. If we be successful (and shall we not be so in such a cause?), we shall have the consolation of having given peace and freedom to the land. I have a sufficiency of world's goods, and thou and thy Mary—nay, start not, I know all—thou and thy Mary will be the support and comfort of my old age, and the subject of my last prayer, as ye have been of many, many in the days bygone. Bid your friends farewell, and an hour hence we meet to part no more. Be cautious, however, my son, for these men of Belial have set a guard on the city, and death is the lot of all who seem about to leave it. Farewell! God bless thee, my dear son;" and he again folded him in his arms.

When Basil was left to himself, it would have been difficult to say whether he was more sorrowful or joyful. He had found his father, a fond and doting father; but his heart revolted at turning his back on the scenes of his youth and the smiling face of his Mary. The latter was the more distressing. She had listened to his suit, and the good-natured provost, when acquainted with it, had sworn that no other should marry his Mary. His own father seemed to approve his passion; wherefore he resolved to bid her farewell, and moved accordingly to the provost's house.

She was alone, and received him with her usual smile of joy, but was startled at the unusual expression of sorrow on his countenance. "Mary," said he; but his lips could articulate nothing farther.

She became alarmed. "Basil, you are ill!" said she.

He seized her hand. "Mary, I am come to bid you farewell—perhaps a long farewell."

She became pale in her turn, and asked him to explain himself. He resumed,—

"When we were young, Mary, you were my only companion, and I yours. You were unhappy when away from Basil Rolland, and I when absent from Mary Leslie. When, in the folly of play, I had girded myself with your father's sword, you complained to him, while the tears ran down your cheeks, that brother Basil was leaving you to become a soldier. Such things at the time are trifling; but how often are they the types of blessed love in riper years. I am now to leave you to mingle in scenes of strife: let me carry with me the consciousness of your continued love; confirm to me the troth that you have plighted, and, come life or death, I shall be happy."

"But why, O Basil, why are you leaving us? Have we not more need of thy presence than ever?"

"I have found my father, and by his command I leave you this very night."

"This night!" said she, while the

tears coursed in torrents down her pale cheek. Basil caught her in his arms, and they wept together who had never known sorrow before.

"Be comforted, Mary," said Basil at length; "we shall meet again, and the present sorrow will enhance the gladness of the meeting. My happiness depends entirely on you, and my father looks fondly to our union."

"Oh! when you are gone far from this, you will soon forget the vows that you have made. I have no mother to guide me; oh, do not then deceive me, Basil."

"I swear that my heart never owned the influence of another, and that its last beat shall be true to you."

"Then," said she, throwing herself into his arms, "I am happy!"

Basil hastily explained to her what he knew of his destination, and, with a chaste kiss of mutual transport, they separated.

He acquainted no other person with his intention of departing, but returned to make some preparations for his journey. These were soon completed; he was joined by his father, and leaving the town at sunset, they walked leisurely to Stonehaven, where Montrose's army was encamped.

CHAPTER III.

See how he clears the points o' faith.—*Burns.*

Hamlet. Hold you the watch to-night?

Horatio. We do, my lord.—*Shakspeare.*

DAY was dawning as our travellers reached the camp of the Covenanters. They rested for some time to partake of victuals, which their journey rendered necessary. Isaac Rolland then judged it proper to present his son to Montrose, and accordingly conducted him to Duntoor, where the general then was. They were admitted to his presence.

"I expected you sooner, Rolland,"

said Montrose. "What intelligence have you gathered?"

"The enemy are preparing to take the field with a numerous and well-appointed force, and I have gathered, from a sure source, that it is their intention to attack our forces as soon as some needful supplies are received from the north."

"How do the citizens stand affected?"

"Almost to a man they have joined Aboyne. They have fortified the city and the bridge, and are determined to hold out to the last."

"The ungrateful truce-breaking slaves!" said Montrose. "But vengeance is at hand. Who is this young man whom thou hast brought with thee?"

"My son," said Isaac, "whom grace hath inclined to take part with us."

"A youth of gallant bearing! Young man, thy father's faithfulness is a warrant for thine. Let thy fidelity equal thy reputed spirit, and thou shalt not lack the encouragement due to thy deserts. You may both retire to rest, and I will apprise you of the duties required of you."

They saluted the general, and retired.

A foraging party returned with a report that Aboyne was already on his march. This was found to be incorrect by some scouts who had been dispatched that evening to gather what information they could about the enemy's motions. They brought the intelligence, however, that Aboyne's equipments were completed, and that it was the popular belief that he would march immediately to meet the Covenanters. Preparations were accordingly made for immediate marching. Numerous foraging parties scoured the adjacent country for provisions, and horses for transporting the baggage and ammunition. According to the custom of the Congregation, when about to engage in warfare, the next day was appointed for a general fast throughout the host.

There perhaps never was assembled any body for the purposes of religious worship that exhibited such an appearance of romantic sublimity as the Covenanters did on such occasions. At the present time they were assembled under the blue canopy of heaven, in a hollow valley betwixt two mountains, the summits of which were planted with sentinels, to give notice to the main

body of any interruption. Upon the declivity of one of the mountains was erected a wooden pulpit, before which was assembled the army, to the number of about 2000 men. A dead stillness prevailed among them, while the preacher, a man richly endowed with that nervous and fiery eloquence which was the most effectual with men in their situation, explained to them a passage from the fifteenth chapter of Second Samuel :—"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and sucking, ox and sheep, camel and ass." This passage he applied to the condition of the Covenanters. He described the sufferings and grievances of the persecuted kirk, and showed that the Almighty did not disregard these, but, in His own time, would avenge the blood of His saints. He told them that God was now calling on all who were on His side to fight for the good of the land, and that His soul could have no pleasure in those who drew back from the approaching contest. "And now," said he, while the fire flashed from his eyes, as with prophetic ardour, which was answered by a corresponding enthusiasm in his hearers; "and now the men of Babylon have set up an image of gold, even a molten image, and they say, 'Fall down and worship the image that we have set up;' and they have fenced themselves with entrenched cities, and they have encompassed themselves with spears, and a multitude of horsemen and slingers, and archers, and they say unto this help from Egypt, 'This shall be for a deliverance unto us.' But fear not ye the multitude of their strong ones, neither be dismayed at the neighing of their horses; for the Lord of hosts is on our side, and His right hand shall

work valiantly for us. He breaketh the iron weapon, and burneth the chariot in the fire. He laugheth at the bow of steel and the rattling of the quiver. Walled cities are no defence against His hand, nor the place of strength, when His thunder muttereth in the sky. Wherefore, gird up your loins to fight the battles of the Lord. Smite the Amalekites from Dan even unto Beersheba. Destroy the lines of their tents, and their choice young men, that the reproach may be removed from the camp of Israel. Turn not aside from the sacrifice like the faint-hearted Saul, but smite them till they be utterly consumed, and their name become a hissing, and an abomination, and a by-word upon the earth. Think on your children, and your children's children, from age to age, who shall hold your name in everlasting remembrance, and look to the reward of Him who sitteth between the cherubim, who hath said, that whosoever layeth down his life for My sake shall find it.

"The days are now come when the father shall deliver up the son to death, and the son the father; when the brother shall be divided against the sister, and the sister against the mother. But the days of Zion's peace shall also come, when all the princes of the earth shall bow down before her, and call her the fairest among women. (Canticles, sixth and first.) The house of the Lord shall be established on the tops of the mountains. The New Jerusalem shall appear as a bride adorned for her husband. (Revelations, twenty-first and second.) The tabernacle of God shall be with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor sighing, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things shall have passed away. Go forth, then, to the

battle. Quit yourselves like men. Be strong. Look to those ancient worthies who, through faith, subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the alien. Fear not their multitude nor their fury, for he that is with you is greater than your enemies. Think on the persecuted state of Zion, and may the God of battles be for a buckler and a defence unto you!"

A hum of approbation ran along the lines of the Covenanters at the conclusion of this discourse, while the preacher called upon them to join with him in praising the Almighty. The part chosen was that eloquent passage of the eightieth psalm, where the Israelites are spoken of under the similitude of a vine.

As the last note of this hymn ascended in solemn strains to the lofty heaven, several of the scouts made their appearance, with jaded horses, bringing the news that Aboyne was already on his march, and approaching rapidly to Stonehaven. Orders were immediately given to the army of the Covenanters to set out on their journey. These were promptly obeyed, and, in a few hours, the armies met at Megray Hill. This was announced to the Covenanters by their advanced guard being driven back by the royalists. It was not, however, Aboyne's intention to hazard a general engagement, as his soldiers were wearied by the march. But Montrose, dispatching a strong band of infantry, supported by a detachment of cavalry, broke upon them suddenly both in flank and rear, involved them in the greatest confusion, and forced them to seek Aberdeen by a rapid flight, after leaving a considerable number dead on the field. Montrose pursued them, with the greatest possible dispatch, to Aberdeen, where they made a stand. The Bridge of Dee was fortified in a very strong manner, and protected by four field-pieces and a strong guard of the citizens. Montrose

made several attempts at forcing it, but was vigorously repulsed by the defenders, who poured in a shower of missiles with effect on the assailants, while they themselves were so sheltered by their breastworks that they received little injury. Montrose was obliged, therefore, to draw off his forces, and, as it was evening, gave up the thought of any farther attack. Having found a convenient place, he pitched his camp about a mile from the bridge, and stationed his sentinels on the little eminences in its neighbourhood, while those of Aboyne were planted on both sides of the river for a considerable distance above and below the bridge. Both armies, fatigued with the exertions of the day, availed themselves of the repose offered by their situation, and in a short time the busy hum of both camps was changed into stillness.

Our hero had accompanied the army during the march, with that wonder and admiration which youthful minds feel in such spirit-stirring scenes. The strictness of the military duty, the contempt of danger, the degree of subordination and regularity that prevailed (for the abilities of Montrose prevented that ruinous confusion which the camp of the Covenanters too often exhibited), and the promptness and patience with which the necessary commands were executed made an impression on the mind of Basil strongly in favour of his military life. The general, at the commencement of the march, ordered him to be near his person, and by means, as the Covenanters would have said, of a "soul-searching" conversation, contrived to get a clear view of his character and worth. The opinion that he made up was in favour of Basil, and he scrupled not to give him more direct assurances of his favour than he had hitherto done. The honours that had been paid him by this distinguished statesman and general gave rise to a new train of ideas in his mind; and,

as the army was preparing for the night's repose, he was charging the enemy at the head of his own troops, succouring the distressed damsel, and hurling unheard-of destruction on his foes. But the mightiest conquerors have often found themselves conquered when they least expected it; and, as the valiant Don Quixote felt his very soul withering when thinking on the absence of his Dulcinea, so our hero regarded the short time that he had been separated from his Mary to be an age. An ugly river and a hostile army lay between him and his love. If Leander swam across the Hellespont, surely he might cross the Dee, and trust the rest to his prudence and good fortune.

His father was engaged with the general; so out he wandered, and, by his correct local knowledge, succeeded in passing the various sentinels, and getting to the banks of the river, a little below the rocks called the Craig-lug, where he had the fortune to find a small fishing-boat (for, so far back as the year 1290, Aberdeen is celebrated in history for its salmon-fishings). He easily rowed himself across the river, and, fastening the boat on the northern bank, stole along the water's edge, and entered that part of the town which, as fronting the harbour, was not walled. He directed his course to the Broadgate, and, as there were still several stragglers in the street, ensconced himself behind a projecting shop till all should be quiet.

When he left the camp, the night was calm and serene. The breeze that floated by was unable to curl the surface of the river, and the moonbeams were dancing in silvery circles on the placid waters as they gurgled by. But this was not of long continuance. The atmosphere became quickly loaded with clouds, the moon was obscured, the rain fell in torrents, and the sullen howling of the east wind, with the hollow muttering of the thunder, indicated one of

those storms which not unfrequently disturb the beauty of summer. Basil wrapped his cloak the closer around him, and hastened to the provost's house. All in it was dark and still. He knocked ; but no one returned an answer. Astonished at this, he endeavoured to open the door, but it resisted his efforts. Being acquainted with all the intricacies of the provost's domicile, he gained admission by a window, but found the house deserted of its inhabitants and stripped of its furniture. Mary Leslie's apartment was then the object of his search. It was also desolate. Her lute, her books, and her landscapes were all removed. In groping through the room, his hand fell on a small picture, which the next flash of lightning discovered to be her miniature. He pressed it to his lips and hid it in his bosom, regarding it, as the holy man did the prophetic mantle, as the last unexpected memorial of a lost friend. It would be vain to attempt to describe his amazement at these appearances. He trembled for his friends, when he knew the deeds of violence that were daily practised in these perilous times. He determined to arouse the neighbourhood—to search for, pursue, and destroy in one breath, all who had been any way concerned in this outrage. Reason, however, came to his aid, and he saw the utter uselessness of his attempting such a thing, except by the assistance that he could obtain from the Covenanters. He therefore turned sorrowfully to retrace his steps, which, from the darkness of the night and the violence of the storm, was not an easy matter. Having rowed himself across the river by the little boat, he was making a circuit to reach the camp, when he saw a light at a small distance from the landing-place. It proceeded from a hut that was built at the foot of the rock for the accommodation of the fishermen. Curious to know who were in it at this untimely hour, he pressed

forward, and listened to the following dialogue :—

“ Ay ! an' will ye tell me that the possession of Joash, the Abiezrite, wasna in Ophrah ? But it's just like a' your foul ; ye ken naething about the Scriptures, but daze yourselves wi' that ill-mumbled mass, the prayer-beuk. But your yill's very gude, and far better than what we have.”

“ I doubtna, my lad,” said another voice ; “ your foul are sae stocked, I daresay Montrose is gaun to mak you a' Nazarenes, for he gies you neither wine nor strong drink.”

“ Dinna speak lightly o' the Scriptures, Sawnie Hackit ; ye're just a blaspheming Shemei, or a time-serving Balaam.”

“ Hout,” said Hackit, “ gie's name o' your foul-mou'd misca'ings. I wunner what the deil garred you turn a Covenanter, Tammas Granehard, for ye usedna to be that fond o' covenants, unless it was ane for a fou pint stoup at Jamie Jinks' hostelry.”

“ I wasna aye i' the right way, Sandie, muckle to my shame ; but better late mend than never do weel ; an' I'm thinking it would be better for you if ye would come wi' us, for your foul can never stand ours, and, instead o' getting share o' the spuilzie, ye'll maybe get but a weel-clawed crown.”

“ I doubtna but ye're very right, Tammas ; but what would come o' my ten achisons ilka day, forby the jibble o' drink, an' my place at Provost Leslie's ? ”

“ I'm doubtin' your place there'll no' be worth muckle, if we tak the town. The provost isna a man to be passed over, wha can sae weel afford to pay for's idolatry.”

“ Did ye ever hear,” said Hackit, “ o him ever losing ony thing when the whigs had the town one day and the royalists the next ? ”

“ Weel, Sandie,” said the other, “ I canna just charge my memory wi' ony

thing o' the kind ; and gif it wasna, it was that God-fearing man, Samuel Fairtext, that saved him."

"Ay," said Hackit ; "and, when the royalists were here, it was the jolly old cavalier that saved Fairtext. Troth, it's the only wiselike partnership that I ken o' at present ; for, if they had been baith whigs or baith royalists, they would have been ruined out o' house and ha' ere this time. But, ye see, when the royalists were in the town, Fairtext kept himself quiet, and they wadna meddle wi' him on Provost Leslie's account. And now a' the gudes are removed, an' put under Fairtext's care ; sae that the Covenanters wudna tak the value of a shoe-tie frae him, for he can pray and grane as weel as ony o' them. The provost and his dochter have left their ain house, and are to dwell wi' Fairtext till the danger be ower."

By the latter part of this conversation, Basil felt as if the imaginary weight of sorrow were removed from his bosom ; but, instead of it, his arms were pinioned on a sudden, by a strong physical force, so firmly, that he was unable to move himself round to discover the occasion of this unceremonious embrace.

"Come here, ye dotterels !" said a strong voice ; "ye sit there, gabbin' an' drinkin' awa, nae caring wha may be hearing you. An' you, my birkie, will better be as quiet's you can, or, deil tak me,—an' I'm no used to swear,—but I'll scour my durk atween the ribs o' ye."

A couple of men now came out of the hut and assisted in dragging Basil into it. As soon as they had forced him in, the person who had first seized him quitted his hold, exclaiming, "Eh, sirs ! is that you?" Hackit also let him go, and Basil was able to look around him. There was neither chair nor table in the booth, but turf seats around the walls, plentifully littered with straw. A candle, fixed in the

neck of an empty bottle, illuminated the place, and revealed a goodly quantity of bottles, with two or three horn drinking-cups on the floor, by which it appeared that the party had been engaged in a debauch.

Thomas Granehard still kept his hold, and, in a stern voice, demanded what he was ?

"What the deil's your business wi' that?" said Hackit. "I ken him, an' that's eneuch."

"But I am strong in spirit," muttered the Covenanter.

"The toom bottles testify that, to a certainty, Tammas," said the other. "But, never mind ; get anither stoup, Geordie, an' sit down, Master Basil."

"Blithely," said Geordie ; "and troth, Master Rolland, I didna ken it was you, or I wudna hae handled you sae roughly. But sit down, for its a coarse night."

"I may not," said Basil. "I must to the camp. But why do I find you here?"

"Ou," said Hackit, "ye see Geordie and me belongs to Aboyne, for the provost sent a' his servants to him. We're upon the watch the night, ye maun ken. But wha, i' the name of the seventy disciples, could stand there-out in a night like this? Sae we made up to the Covenanters' warders, and met in wi' Tammas there, an auld acquaintance ; and we thought it best to come here and keep ourselves warm wi' sic liquor as we could get, and let the camps watch themselves."

"Do you know that you all expose yourselves to death for this frolic?"

"There gang twa words to that bargain. We've done a' that could be reasonably expected,—we watched till the storm came."

"Well, you are not accountable to me ; I must depart."

"Weel, a gude evening to you. But stop !—now that I mind—ye maun gie me the pass-word."

"The pass-word!" said Basil, in a tone of surprise.

"Ay, the pass-word! Ye see, Sergeant Clinker says to me, 'Now, Saunders, if ony ane comes to you that canna say *Balgownie*, ye're to keep him and bring him to me.' Sae, for as weel's I like you, Master Basil, ye canna pass without it."

"*Balgownie*, then," said Basil laughing.

Hackit turned on his heel, saying it was "vera satisfactory," when Granehard remembered that he had got a similar injunction; wherefore, making shift to steady himself a little by leaning on his arquebuss, he delivered himself thus:—

"Beloved brethren,—I mean young man,—I, even I, have also received a commandment from ancient Snuffgrace,

saying, 'Thou shalt abstain from wine and strong drink; and whosoever cometh unto thee that cannot give the pass, *Tiglathpeleser*, thou shalt by no means allow him to escape, otherwise thou shalt be hanged on a tree, as was the bloody Haman, the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite.' Wherefore, now, repeat unto me the word—the light of the moon is darkened—another cup, Sandie—woe to the Man of Sin—a fearsome barking—dumb dogs—Malachi"— And he sank down in a state of complete and helpless intoxication.

Basil earnestly advised Hackit and his companions to return immediately to their posts, and retraced his steps to the camp, as the reader may judge, not excessively gratified with the issue of the night's adventure.

CHAPTER IV.

With forkis and flales they lait grit flappis,
And flang togedder lyk freggis,
With bougars of barnis they beft blew kappis,
Quhyle they of bernis made briggis;
The reird rais rudelie with the rappis,
Quhen rungis were layd on riggis,
The wyffis cam furth with cryis and clappis,
'Lo! quhair my lyking liggis,'

Quo they:

At Christis Kirk on the Grene that day.—*King James I.*

BASIL was dreaming about Mary Leslie when he was awakened by the dreadful note of preparation. The bugles were sounding, men and horses hurrying to and fro, and a body of Cameronians—or "hill-fouk"—had formed themselves into a conventicle beside his tent, and were listening with the greatest attention to a favourite preacher. When he came out, the scene was beyond measure animating. There was no trace of the late storm, and the little birds sang their accustomed songs. All was bustle, both in the camp of the Covenanters and that of the

royalists. The latter were repairing the fortifications of the bridge, which had suffered in the last night's attack. The royalists were already under arms, but Montrose had no design of attacking them, till the ebbing of the tide should render the lower fords passable in case he should be unable to force the bridge. The Covenanters remained idle during the forenoon, while the royalists stood in order of battle, uncertain as to the time of attack.

About two in the afternoon, the shrill sound of a bugle collected the Covenanters to their standards; and Aboyne's

sentinels, who till now had kept on the south bank of the river, fell back to the main body. Our hero was ordered by Montrose to lead a body of horsemen to the lower ford, to remain there till informed of the bridge's being taken, when he was to push to the town and guard Aboyne's house from being plundered, and seize on all papers that might be found in it. He departed accordingly.

Aboyne, being aware that Montrose's intention was to storm the bridge, drew all his forces to its defence. In a valley, at a small distance from the bridge, Montrose stationed the flower of his army, and, with the rest, including the waggoners and other followers of the camp, to make a more formidable appearance, made a feint as if he intended to ford the river above the bridge. This stratagem succeeded, for Aboyne instantly withdrew the greater part of his forces to oppose them, and thus left the most important station almost at the mercy of the enemy. The ambuscade rose immediately, and advanced even to the cannons' mouths. The artillery, however, of that period, was not so formidable as it is now. It was ill-served, ill-directed, and did little execution. A brisk engagement took place at the bridge, which, however, was maintained but a few minutes; for the Covenanters, clearing the bridge of its defenders, and quickly removing the barricades, opened to the right and left a path for their cavalry, who drove the citizens off the field with considerable loss. Aboyne returned quickly with his men to assist the citizens, but their courage was now damped with their loss; so that, by the first charge of the Covenanters, their ranks were broken, and they began to fly in every direction. It was no longer a battle but a rout. The Covenanters hewed down without mercy their flying enemies; and, so exasperated were they at their obstinate flickleness in former times, that the more

merciful among them were hardly able to obtain quarter for those who confessed themselves vanquished. Aboyne, with great exertion, having rallied one hundred horse, made for the town, determined if possible to defend it. Montrose dispatched a party after him, and both, plunging their rowels into their horses' sides, dashed forward over friends and enemies indiscriminately, and arrived close at each other's heels in the town. There was no possibility of shutting the gates; so both entered by St Nicholas Port at the same instant. The intention of Aboyne was thus frustrated, and he found it not an easy matter to escape with his followers by the Gallowgate Port.

The inhabitants had waited with breathless expectation the event of this day's battle, and had in some measure made up their minds in case of Aboyne's failure. But the anticipation fell far short of the reality. The town was in the possession of the enemy. At every turning of the streets there were parties engaged in desperate combat, while the troops of cavalry that occasionally passed sometimes trampled down both friend and foe, never more to rise. The poor citizens were endeavouring to escape from the place with whatever of their effects they could lay hands on. The aged were feebly endeavouring to leave the resting-place of their youth. Wives, mothers, and sisters were searching in tears for their friends, while a loud and piercing shriek announced the agony of the maidens when informed of the death of their betrothed. The innocent children in the confusion were left to wander, neglected by their guardians,—and the records from which this tale is compiled say, that a little boy and girl, who were twins, while wandering hand-in-hand in the streets, unconscious of danger, were crushed by the coursers' hoofs, while their mother was hastening to remove them from danger. But why dwell upon the horrors of this scene?

On a signal given, Basil forded the Dee with his followers, and advanced to the city. Having taken possession of his post, he kept himself on the alert, to restrain any irregularity among his men, which the scene before them was but too well calculated to superinduce. The town was given up to be pillaged. It had been set on fire in different places; therefore it required the utmost attention to prevent his followers from mingling with their companions. He had remained at his post a considerable time, when he heard a piercing shriek in a voice well known to him. He sprang to the place whence it seemed to come, and beheld Mary Leslie struggling with a Covenanter, who was plundering her of the trinkets that adorned her dress. "Villain!" said he, drawing his sword; but the exclamation put the Covenanter on his guard. He aimed a fearful blow at him, but the Covenanter's blade, being of better temper than Basil's, stood the blow, while the other was shivered into a thousand pieces. The Covenanter's weapon was now within a few inches of his breast, when Basil, in a state of desperation, enveloped his hand in his cloak, and seizing the blade suddenly, bent it with such force that it snapped at the hilt—when, seizing a partisan that lay near him, he dealt the Covenanter such a blow with it as felled him to the earth. Basil then hastily asked Mary what she did here.

She informed him that the soldiers had broken into the house in search of plunder, and that she had been obliged to fly when she met with the Covenanter. He asked her where her father was. She told him, weeping, that forty-eight of the principal citizens, along with her father, had been bound, and cast into the common prison.

"Then," said he, "you must allow me to conduct you to a place of safety."

"No, Basil, I cannot. My dear father"—

"He is in no danger; and this is no

place for maidens;" and running speedily for his horse, he placed her, more dead than alive, behind him, and galloped out of the town.

When he returned, which was about eight, the confusion had in a great measure ceased; the magistrates, by a largess of 7000 merks, having prevailed on Montrose to put a stop to the pillage. When Basil came near to his post, he discovered that the house had been plundered, and that an attempt had been made to set it on fire. Montrose and his suite were standing before it; his father was also there, and ran to meet him.

"Thank God, my son, that thou art come. This," looking round him, "this looks not like treason."

"Come hither, Basil Rolland," said Montrose, "and answer me truly. My bowels yearn for thee; yet if what is testified against thee be true, though thou wert my mother's son, God do so to me, and more also, if thou shalt not die the death. Why—why, young man, didst thou desert the important trust assigned to thee?"

Basil told the naked truth.

"Thou hast done wrong, young man; yet thy father, thy youth, thine inexperience, all—all plead with me for thee."

"Heaven bless you, my lord, for the word," said Isaac Rolland. "My life for it, he is innocent!"

"Believe me," said Montrose, "I would fain that he were so. There is not in his eye the alarmed glance of conscious guiltiness. Answer me again, didst thou not join the camp with traitorous intent? Didst thou not, last night, under cloud of darkness, betake thee to the camp of the enemy to tell the Viscount of Aboyne what thou knewest about the strength and intentions of the host?"

The truth and falsehood were here so blended together, that Basil betrayed signs of the greatest confusion, and was silent.

"Nay, now," said Montrose, "he denies it not ; his confusion betrays him. One of the sentinels discovered him,—the very man against whom he this day drew the sword for a prelate-mongering maiden. Young man, this hath destroyed my aversion to sacrifice thee ; and the good cause demands that such treachery pass not unpunished. If thou hast any unrepented sin, prepare thyself ; for yet two days, and thou art with the dead. Bind him, soldiers ; and on the second day hence let him suffer the punishment due to his crimes."

"Stop, my lord," said Isaac Rolland, "and shed not innocent blood. O cut not down the flower in the bud ! Exhaust your vengeance on me ; but spare, oh, spare my son !"

"Entreaty avails not. My duty to the host demands it. And know, I do nothing but what I wish may be my own lot if I betray the good cause. If I betray it, may my best blood be spilled on the scaffold, and may the hangmen put on my shroud !"

This was spoken in an inflexible and enthusiastic tone ; but he knew not that he was condemning himself. His wish was accomplished ; for they who had that day witnessed his proud desire, ere many years, saw one of his mangled limbs bleaching over the city gates. Basil was led off by the guards ; while his father, unable to follow, stood speechless and motionless as a statue.

CHAPTER V.

Farewell, ye dungeons, dark and strong,
The wretch's destine ;
Macpherson's time will not be long
On yonder gallows-tree.—*Old Song.*

BASIL ROLLAND was conducted into one of the cells of the common prison, and, notwithstanding his excitement, fell into a profound slumber ; but it was of that troubled kind which nature obtains by force when the mind is disposed for watchfulness. He imagined himself by the sea, on a beautiful summer evening, walking with his love by the murmuring shore. On a sudden they were separated ; and he, in a small boat, was on the bosom of the ocean. The tempest was raging in all its grandeur, and the unwilling bark was whirling and reeling on the mountainous waves ; it struck upon a rock, and was dashed into a thousand pieces. He felt the waters rushing in his ears ; he saw the sea-monsters waiting for their prey ; and his bubbling screams filled his own heart with horror. He sunk—but the waters receded and receded, till he stood firmly on a dry

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rock. A vast plain was around him—a black and barren wilderness, without one plant, one shrub, or one blade of grass. It lay stretched before him, as far as his eye could reach, the same dismal, monotonous scene of desolation. On a sudden, the mists that covered its termination were dispelled, and piles of rocky mountains, whose tops touched the clouds, began to close around him. A vast amphitheatre of smooth and perpendicular stone surrounded him, and chained him to the desert. The rocky walls began to contract themselves, and to move nearer to the spot where he stood. Their summits were covered with multitudes of spectators, whose fiendish shout was echoed from rock to rock, until it fell upon his aching ear. Wild, unearthly faces were before him on every side ; and fingers pointed at him with a demoniacal giggle. The rocks still moved on. The narrow

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circle on which he stood was darkened by their height—he heard the clashing of their collision—he felt his body crushed and bruised by the gigantic pressure. He raised his voice to shriek his last farewell ; but the scene was changed. The grave had given up her dead ; and the sea, the dead that were in her. He was among the companions of his childhood ; and not one was wanting. The jest and the game went on as in the days of his youth. His departed mother awaited his return ; but her kiss of welcome blenched his cheek with cold. Again he was involved in a scene of strife. The death-bearing missiles were whizzing around him ; but he had not the power to lift an arm in his own defence. A supernatural energy chained him to the spot, and paralysed all his efforts. A gigantic trooper levelled his carbine at him ; the aim was taken deliberately ; he heard the snap of the lock ; he saw the flash of fire ; he gave a loud and piercing shriek, and awoke in agony, gasping for breath.

The sun was shining through the grated window when he awoke, weak and exhausted by his unrefreshing sleep. He found the sober form of the Covenanting preacher seated beside his pallet, with a small Bible in his hand.

"I thought it my duty," said the preacher, "to visit thee, and mark how thou bearest thyself under this dispensation, and to offer thee that consolation, in the name of my Master, which smoothes the passage to the tomb."

"You have my thanks," said the unfortunate youth. "Have you waited long in the apartment?"

"I came at daybreak ; but often was I tempted to rouse thee from thy slumbers, for thy dreams seemed terrifying."

"I have indeed passed a fearful night. Fancy has chased fancy in my scorching brain till it appeared reality.

But I can spend only another such night."

"I grieve to tell thee, young man, that thy days are numbered : all the intercession of thy father and his friends hath been fruitless. I also talked to James of Montrose concerning thee ; for I hold that he hath overstretched the limit of his power, and that there is no cause of death in thee : but he treated me as one that mocketh, when I unfolded the revealed will of God, that the earth will not cover innocent blood ; wherefore turn, I beseech thee, thine eyes to the Lord,—for vain is the help of man. Look to the glory on the other side of the grave. Fear not them which can kill the body, but after that can have no power ; but fear Him that can cast both soul and body into hell."

"I fear not, father ; I fear not death. I could close my eyes for ever on the green land of God without a sigh. Had death met me in the field, the bugle would have sung my requiem, and I would have laid me on the turf, happy in being permitted to die like a man ; but to die like a thief—like a dog—is fearful and appalling. Besides, there are ties which bind to earth souls stronger than mine. Alas ! alas ! what is the common approach of Death to the stealthy and ignominious step with which he visits me !"

"Compose thyself," said the preacher, "and let these earthly wishes have no place in thy thoughts. Time, to thee, is nearly done, and eternity is at hand. Approach thy Creator, as the Father of Mercy, in His Son. Murmur not at His dispensations ; for He chasteneth in love."

"A hard lesson !" said Basil. "Tell me, didst thou ever love a wife, a son, or a daughter ?"

"I lost a wife and a son," said the preacher with emotion.

"In what manner ?" said Basil.

"I visited the west country, on business of the Congregation, and in

my absence the hand of Death was busy in my house. When I returned, my wife and son were both beneath the sod. But God's will be done ! They are now in heaven," said he, while the tears stole down his cheeks.

"And," said Basil, "did you never feel a desire again to see them ? Did you not wish that the decree of fate had been altered, and that your family had been again restored to you ?"

"Often—often," said he, wringing his hands. "God forgive me ! often have I murmured at His dispensation. At some seasons I would have bartered my life—nay, my soul's weal—for one hour of their society."

"And yet ye bid me do that which ye confess to be above your efforts ! You lost but your wife and child ; I lose my own life—my fame—my Mary."

"But your father"—

"Peace ! I have no father—no friend—no love. To-morrow's sun will see me as I was before my being ; all of me gone, except my name coupled with hated murderers and traitors. Away, away, old man ! it drives me to madness. But, if the spirits of the dead can burst the sepulchre, I will be near my murderer. In the blackness of night I will be near him, and whisper in his thoughts dark, dark as hell."

"Have patience"—

"Patience ! Heaven and earth ! Remove these bonds," said he, striking his manacles together till the vaulted roof echoed the clanking. "Give me my sword,—place Montrose before me,—and I'll be patient ! very patient !"—and he burst into a fit of hysterical laughter which made the preacher shudder.

"Prepare to meet thy God, young man," exclaimed the Covenanter. He succeeded in gaining his attention, and resumed : "Thy thoughts are full of carnal revenge, forgetting Him who hath said, 'vengeance is mine.' I tell thee that thy thoughts are evil, and

not good. Turn thyself to thy Saviour, and, instead of denouncing woe on thy fellows, prepare thyself for thy long journey."

"Long, indeed !" said Basil, entering into a new train of ideas. "Ere to-morrow's sun go down, my soul, how far wilt thou have travelled ? Thou wilt outstrip the lightning's speed. And then, the account ! I am wrong, good man ; but my brain is giddy. Leave me now,—but, prithee, return."

"I shall see thee again. Put thy trust in the Lord. Compose thy troubled mind, and God be with thee ! Thy father is soliciting thy pardon ; and he bade me tell thee he would visit thee to-day. I'll go to Montrose myself,—for he shall pardon thee."

The day following, a dark gibbet frowned in the centre of the market-place, erected in the bore of the millstone which lies at this day in the middle of Castle Street. At an early hour the whole square was filled with spectators to witness the tragedy. A powerful band of the Covenanters guarded the scaffold. A deep feeling of sympathy pervaded the multitude, for the wretched prisoner was known to almost every individual. Every one was talking to his neighbour on the distressing event, with an interest which showed the intensity of their sympathy with the sufferer.

"Willawins ! willawins !" said an aged woman ; "I suckled him at this auld breast, and dandled him in these frail arms. On the vera last winter, when I was ill wi' an income, he was amaisit the only ane that came to speir for me ; an' weel I wat, he didna come toom-handed. I just hirpled out, because I thought I wad like to see his bonny face and his glossy curls ance mair ; but I canna thole that black woodie ! It glamours my auld een. Lord be wi' him ! Eh, sirs ! eh, sirs !"

"Vera right, cummer," said Tenor the wright ; "it's a waesome business. Troth, ilk a nail that I drove into that

woodie, I could have wished to have been a nail o' my ain coffin."

"And what for stand ye a' idle here?" said a withered beldame, whom Basil had found means to save from being tried for witchcraft, which, as the reader is aware that "Jeddart justice" was administered on these occasions, was tantamount to condemnation. "Why stand ye idle here? I've seen the time when a' the Whigs in the land dauredna do this. Tak the sword! tak the sword! The day 'ill come when the corbies will eat Montrose's fause heart, and"—

"Whisht, sirs! whisht!" exclaimed several voices; and there was a rush among the crowd, which made the whole mass vibrate like the waves of the sea. It was the appearance of our hero, surrounded by a guard of the insurgents. His arms were bound. The cart followed behind; but he was spared the indignity of riding in it. It contained the executioner, a miserable-looking man, tottering in the extremity of old age. It also bore the prisoner's coffin. His demeanour was calm and composed, his step firm and regular; but the flush of a slight hectic was on his cheek. He was attended by the Covenanting preacher, whom, on his coming out, he asked, "If *she* knew of this?" He whispered in his ear. "Then the bitterness of death is past;" and the procession moved on. These were the last words he was heard to utter. He never raised his eyes from the ground till he reached the scaffold, when, with a determined and convulsive energy, he bent his eyes upon the scene before him. It was but for a moment; and they sank again to the earth, while his lips were moving in secret prayer.

We must now retrograde a little in our story, to mark the progress of two horsemen, who, about noon, were advancing with the utmost rapidity to Aberdeen. These were Isaac Rolland and Hackit, Provost Leslie's servant.

To explain their appearance here, it will be necessary to notice some events of the preceding day. Isaac Rolland and his friends had applied earnestly to Montrose for the repeal of his hasty sentence; and their representations seemed to have great weight with him. He told them to return early next morning to receive his answer. At the first peep of day Isaac was at his lodgings, and found, to his surprise and sorrow, that news had arrived of the pacification of Berwick late the evening before, and that Montrose had instantly taken horse for the south. There was no time to be lost, and, accompanied by Hackit, he set out on horseback to Arbroath, where Montrose was to rest for a little, and reached it as the other was preparing to depart.

The pardon was readily granted, as peace was now established between all the king's subjects. Montrose, moreover, acknowledged that he had proceeded too hastily.

They accordingly set out on their journey, and spared neither whip nor spur, lest they should arrive too late. They changed horses at Dunottar, and rode on to Aberdeen with all the speed they could make. When about six miles from the town, Isaac Rolland's horse broke down under him, when Hackit, who was better mounted, seized the papers, and, bidding him follow as fast as possible, pushed on. The noble animal that bore him went with the speed of lightning, but far too slowly for the impatient rider. Having shot along the bridge of Dee at full gallop, he arrived at Castle Street, by the Shiprow with his horse panting and foaming, while the clotted blood hung from the armed heels of his rider.

"A pardon! a pardon!" shouted Hackit, as he recklessly galloped over and through the thick-set multitude, and lancing to the quick his horse's sides with his deep rowels at every exclamation. "A pardon! a pardon!"

cried he, advancing still faster, for the rope was adjusted, and all was ready for the fatal consummation. "Lord hae mercy on him!" His horse with one bound brought him to the foot of the scaffold, and then dropped down dead, while a loud execration burst from the spectators, which drowned his cries. The prisoner was thrown off just in Hackit's sight as he advanced, the Covenanters having dreaded that this was the beginning of some commotion. He threw the sealed pardon at the head of the commandant, and, mounting the scaffold, cut the cord in a twinkling, letting the body fall into the arms of some of the crowd who had followed him; and, quicker than thought, conveyed him into an adjacent house, where every means was tried to restore animation. There was not one who could refrain from tears when they compared the crushed and maimed being before them with the jovial young man he was a few days before. His eyes, bleared and bloodshot, were protruded from their sockets; a red circle surrounded his neck, and the blood, coagulated under his eyes, showed the effects of strangulation. After some time he heaved a sigh, and attempted to raise his right hand to his breast; his intention was anticipated, and a picture that hung round his neck was put into his hand. At this moment Mary Leslie entered the apartment. A tremulous shuddering ran through his frame; he attempted to raise himself, but life ebbed by the effort, and, with a deep groan, he fell back into the arms of death. Mary Leslie, however, did not witness his departure, for she had sunk senseless on the floor. When she recovered, all was calm, save her eye

which rolled with the quickness of insanity.

"Hush!" said she; "he sleeps, and you will waken him. I'll cover him with my own plaid, for it is cold—cold." She set herself to cover him, and sang the verse of the ballad—

My love has gone to the good green wood
To hunt the dark-brown daes;
His beild will be the ferny den,
Or the shade of the heathery braes.
But I'll build my love a bonny bower—

"Basil, awake! the old man waits you at the Playfield—arise! He hears me not—ha—I remember!" and she sank again on the floor, and was carried home by her friends.

A fair company of young men bore Basil to his grave; and by his side a weeping band of maidens carried Mary Leslie. They were lovely in their lives, and in death they were not separated. One grave contains them both, which was long hallowed by the remembrance of this tragical transaction. The sacred spot has now become common ground, and I have searched in vain for it, that I might shed one tear to the memory of the unfortunate lovers.

The goodwill of his fellow-citizens called Patrick Leslie several times to be their chief magistrate; but life to him had lost its savour, and he lingered for several years in this world as one whose hopes and enjoyments were elsewhere. It was said that Isaac Rolland, at stated intervals, visited the grave of his son, and watered it with the tear of unavailing sorrow. He afterwards involved himself with the factions that tore the kingdom asunder, and, it was supposed, perished at the battle between the Covenanters and Oliver Cromwell, at Dunbar, in 1650.—*Aberdeen Censor.*

THE LAST OF THE JACOBITES.

BY ROBERT CHAMBERS, LL.D.

I HAD occasion to mention, at the conclusion of my “History of the Insurrection of 1745,” that after that period the spirit of Jacobitism became a very different thing from what it had formerly been; that, acquiring no fresh adherents among the young subsequent to that disastrous year, it grew old, and decayed with the individuals who had witnessed its better days; and that, in the end, it became altogether dependent upon the existence of a few aged enthusiasts, more generally of the female than the male sex.

These relics of the party—for they could be called nothing else—soon became isolated in the midst of general society; and latterly were looked upon, by modern politicians, with a feeling similar to that with which the antediluvian patriarchs must have been regarded in the new world, after they had survived several generations of their short-lived descendants. As their glory lay in all the past, they took an especial pride in retaining every description of manners and dress which could be considered old-fashioned, much upon the principle which induced Will Honeycomb to continue wearing the wig in which he had gained a young lady’s heart. Their manners were entirely of that stately and formal sort which obtained at the commencement of the eighteenth century, and which is so inseparably associated in the mind of a modern with ideas of full-bottomed perukes, long-backed coats, gold-buckled shoes, and tall walking canes. Mr Pitt’s tax, which had so strong an effect upon the heads of the British public, did not perhaps unsettle one grain of truly Jacobite powder; nor is it hypothetical to suppose that the general abandon-

ment of snuff-taking by the ladies, which happened rather before that period, wrenched a single box from the fingers of any ancient dame, whose mind had been made up on politics, as her taste had been upon black rappee, before the year of grace 1745.

In proportion as the world at large ceased to regard the claims of the house of Stuart, and as old age advanced upon those who still cherished them, the spirit of Jacobitism, once so lofty and so chivalrous, assimilated more and more with the mere imbecility of dotage. What it thus lost, however, in extensive application, it gained in virulence; and it perhaps never burned in any bosoms with so much fervour as in those few which last retained it. True, the generosity which characterised it in earlier and better times had now degenerated into a sort of acrid humour, like good wine turned into vinegar. Yet, if an example were wanting of the true inveterate Jacobite, it could not be found anywhere in such perfection as amongst the few who survived till recent times, and who had carried the spirit unscathed and unquenched through three-quarters of a century of every other kind of political sentiment.

As no general description can present a very vivid portraiture to the mind, it may be proper here to condescend upon the features of the party, by giving a sketch of an individual Jacobite who was characterised in the manner alluded to, and who might be considered a fair specimen of his brethren. The person meant to be described, might be styled the *LAST OF THE JACOBITES*; for, at the period of his death in 1825, there was not known to exist, at least in Edinburgh, any person, besides himself,

who refused to acknowledge the reigning family. His name was Alexander Halket. He had been, in early life, a merchant in the remote town of Fraserburgh, on the Moray Firth; but had retired for many years before his death, to live upon a small annuity in Edinburgh. The propensity which characterised him, in common with all the rest of his party, to regard the antiquities of his native land with reverence, joined with the narrowness of his fortune in inducing him to take up his abode in the Old Town.

He lodged in one of those old stately hotels near the palace of Holyroodhouse, which had formerly been occupied by the noblemen attendant upon the Scottish court, but which have latterly become so completely overrun by the lower class of citizens. Let it not be supposed that he possessed the whole of one of these magnificent hotels. He only occupied two rooms in one of the floors or "flats" into which all such buildings in Edinburgh are divided; and these he possessed only in the character of a lodger, not as tenant at first hand. He was, nevertheless, as comfortably domiciled as most old gentlemen who happen to have survived the period of matrimony. His room—for one of them was so styled *par excellence*—was cased round with white-painted panelling, and hung with a number of portraits representing the latter members of the house of Stuart, among whom the Old and Young Chevaliers were not forgotten.* His windows

had a prospect on the one hand of the quiet and cloistered precincts of Chessels' Court, and on the other to the gilded spires and gray, time-honoured turrets of Holyroodhouse. Twice a year, when he held a card party, with three candles on the table, and the old joke about the number which adorn that of the laird of Grant, was he duly gratified with compliments upon the comfortable nature of his "room," by the ancient Jacobite spinsters and dowagers, who, in silk mantles and pattens, came from Abbeyhill and New Street to honour him with their venerable company.

Halket was an old man of dignified appearance, and generally wore a dress of the antique fashion above alluded to. On Sundays and holidays he always exhibited a sort of court-dress, and walked with a cane of more than ordinary stateliness. He also assumed this dignified attire on occasions of peculiar ceremony. It was his custom, for instance, on a particular day every year, to pay a visit to the deserted court of Holyrood in this dress, which he considered alone suitable to an affair of so much importance. On the morning of

bited to his guests with no small complacency. Many of his friends were, like himself, too blindly attached to everything that carried a show of antiquity to suspect the cheat; and others were too good-natured to disturb a harmless delusion, from the indulgence of which he derived so much satisfaction. One of them, however, actuated by an unhappy spirit of connoisseurship, was guilty of the cruelty of undeceiving him, and not only persuaded him that the picture was not a likeness of the goddess of his idolatry,—Queen Mary,—but possessed him with the belief that it represented the vinegar aspect of the hated Elizabeth. Mr Halket, however, was too proud to acknowledge his mortification by causing the picture to be removed, or perhaps it might not have been convenient for him to supply its place; and he did not want wit to devise a pretext for allowing it to remain, without compromising his hostility to the English queen one whit. "Very well," said he, "I am glad you have told me it is Elizabeth; for I shall have the pleasure of showing my contempt of her every day by turning my back upon her when I sit down to table."

* Some rascally picture-dealer had imposed upon him a nondescript daub of the female face divine as a likeness of the beautiful Queen Mary. How he accomplished this it is not easy to say; probably he was acquainted with Mr Halket's ardent devotion to the cause of the house of Stuart, at every period of its history, and availed himself of this knowledge to palm the wretched portrait upon the old gentleman's unsuspecting enthusiasm. Certain it is that the said portrait was hung in the place of honour—over the mantelpiece—in Mr. Halket's apartment, and was, on state occasions, exhi-

the particular day which he was thus wont to keep holy, he always dressed himself with extreme care, got his hair put into order by a professional hand, and, after breakfast, walked out of doors with deliberate steps and a solemn mind. His march down the Canongate was performed with all the decorum which might have attended one of the state processions of a former day. He did not walk upon the pavement by the side of the way. That would have brought him into contact with the modern existing world, the rude touch of which might have brushed from his coat the dust and sanctitude of years. He assumed the centre of the street, where, in the desolation which had overtaken the place, he ran no risk of being jostled by either carriage or foot-passenger, and where the play of his thoughts and the play of his cane-arm alike got ample scope. There, wrapped up in his own pensive reflections, perhaps imagining himself one in a court-pageant, he walked along, under the lofty shadows of the Canongate,—a wreck of yesterday floating down the stream of to-day, and almost in himself a procession.

On entering the porch of the palace he took off his hat; then, pacing along the quadrangle, he ascended the staircase of the Hamilton apartments, and entered Queen Mary's chambers. Had the beauteous queen still kept court there, and still been sitting upon her throne to receive the homage of mankind, Mr Halket could not have entered with more awe-struck solemnity of deportment, or a mind more alive to the nature of the scene. When he had gone over the whole of the various rooms, and also traversed in mind the whole of the recollections which they are calculated to excite, he retired to the picture-gallery, and there endeavoured to recall, in the same manner, the more recent glories of the court of Prince Charles. To have seen the amiable old enthusiast sitting in that long and lofty hall, gazing

alternately upon vacant space and the portraits which hang upon the walls, and to all appearance absorbed beyond recall in the contemplation of the scene, one would have supposed him to be fascinated to the spot, and that he conceived it possible, by devout wishes, long and fixedly entertained, to annul the interval of time, and reproduce upon that floor the glories which once pervaded it, but which had so long passed away. After a day of pure and most ideal enjoyment, he used to retire to his own house, in a state of mind approaching, as near as may be possible on this earth, to perfect beatitude.*

Mr Halket belonged, as a matter of course, to the primitive apostolical church, whose history has been so intimately and so fatally associated with that of the house of Stuart. He used to attend an obscure chapel in the Old Town; one of those unostentatious places of worship to which the Episcopalian clergy had retired, when dispossessed of their legitimate fane at the Revolution, and where they have since performed the duties of religion, rather, it may be said, to a family, or at most a circle of acquaintances, than to a congregation. He was one of the old-fashioned sort of Episcopalians, who always used to pronounce the responses aloud; and, during the whole of the Liturgy, he held up one of his hands in an attitude of devotion. One portion alone of that formula did he abstain from assenting to—the prayer for the Royal Family. At that place, he always blew his nose, as a token of contempt.

* He paid a visit, in full dress, with a sword by his side, to the Crown Room, in Edinburgh Castle, immediately after the old regalia of the kingdom had been there discovered in 1818. On this occasion a friend of the author saw him, and endeavoured to engage him in conversation, as he was marching up the Castle Hill; but he was too deeply absorbed in reflection upon the sacred objects which he had to see, to be able to speak. He just gazed on the person accosting him, and walked on.

In order that even his eye might not be offended by the names of the Hanoverian family, as he called them, he used a prayer-book which had been printed before the Revolution, and which still prayed for King Charles, the Duke of York, and the Princess Anne. He was excessively accurate in all the forms of the Episcopalian mode of worship ; and indeed acted as a sort of fugleman to the chapel ; the rise or fall of his person being in some measure a signal to guide the corresponding motions of all the rest of the congregation.

Such was Alexander Halket—at least in his more poetical and gentlemanly aspect. His character and history, however, were not without their disagreeable points. For instance, although but humbly born himself, he was perpetually affecting the airs of an aristocrat, was always talking of “good old families, who had seen better days,” and declaimed incessantly against the upstart pride and consequence of people who

had originally been nothing. This peculiarity, which was, perhaps, after all, not inconsistent with his Jacobite craze, he had exhibited even when a shopkeeper in Fraserburgh. If a person came in, for instance, and asked to have a hat, Halket would take down one of a quality suitable, as he thought, to the rank or wealth of the customer, and if any objection was made to it, or a wish expressed for one of a better sort, he would say, “That hat, sir, is quite good enough for a man in your rank of life. I will give you no other.” He was also very finical in the decoration of his person, and very much of a hypochondriac in regard to little incidental maladies. Somebody, to quiz him on this last score, once circulated a report that he had caught cold one night, going home from a party, in consequence of having left off wearing a particular gold ring. And it really was not impossible for him to have believed such a thing, extravagant as it may appear.

THE GRAVE-DIGGER'S TALE.

IT was one cold November morning, on the day of an intended voyage, when Mrs M'Cosey, my landlady, tapped at my bed-chamber door, informing me that it was “braid day light ;” but on reaching the caller air I found, by my watch and the light of the moon, that I had full two hours to spare for such sublunary delights as such a circumstance might create. A traveller, when he has once taken his leave, and rung the changes of “farewell,” “adieu,” “good-bye,” and “God bless you,” on the connubial and domestic harmonies of his last lodgings, will rather hazard his health by an exposure to the “pelting

of the pitiless storm,” for a handful of hours, than try an experiment on his landlady’s sincerity a second time, within the short space of the same moon. If casualty should force him to make an abrupt return, enviable must be his feelings if they withstand the cold unfriendly welcome of “Ye’re no awa yet !” delivered by some quivering Abigail, in sylvan equipment, like one of Dian’s foresters, as she slowly and uninvitingly opens the creaking door—a commentary on the forbidding salute. He enters, and the strong caloric now beginning to thaw his sensibilities, he makes for his room, which he forgets is no longer

his; when, though he be still in the dark, he has no need of a candle to enable him to discover that some kind remembrancer has already been rummaging his corner cupboard, making lawful seizure and removal ("‘convey’ the wise it call") of the contents of his tea-caddy, butter-kit, sugar-bowl, and "‘comforter;” to which he had looked forward, on his return, as a small solace for the disappointment of the morning, affording him the means of knocking up a comfortable "‘check,” without again distressing the exchequer.

I had therefore determined not to return to Mrs M’Cosey’s; for "‘frailty, thy name is woman;” and I felt myself getting into a sad frame of mind, as I involuntarily strolled a considerable distance along the high road, pondering on the best means of walking "‘out of the air,” as Hamlet says, when, as the moon receded behind a black cloud, my head came full butt against a wall; the concussion making it ring, till I actually imagined I could distinguish something like a tune from my brain. Surely, said I, this is no melody of my making; as I now heard, like two voices trolling a merry stave—

Duncan’s comin’, Donald’s comin’, &c.

Turning round to the direction from whence the sound seemed to proceed, I perceived I was in the neighbourhood of the "‘Auld Kirk Yard;” where, by the light from his lantern, I could discover the old grave-digger at work—his bald head, with single white and silvery-crisped forelock, making transits over the dark line of the grave, like a white-crested dove, or a sea-gull, flaunting over the yawning gulf.

One stride, and I had cleared the wall of the Auld Kirk Yard.

"‘You seem merry, old boy!—You are conscious, I presume, that this world has few troubles that can affect you in your present situation—the grave.”

"‘I was takin’ my medicine to keep

my heart up, sir; but I wasna merry: yet I’m content wi’ my station, and am a thocht independent. I court the company o’ nae man alive; I boo to nae man breathin’—I quarrel nane wi’ my neebours;—yet am I sought after by high and low, rich and puir; the king himsel maun come under my rule—this rod of airn;—though I’m grown frail and feckless afore my time: for healthy as my looks be, I’m aye, aye at death’s door; our work, ye see, sir, is a’ below the breath; and that’s a sair trade for takin’ the wind oot o’ a body. Then, I hae my trials,—sair visitations, sic as fa’ to the lot o’ nae man on this side the grave but mysel! It’s true, that when the wind gaes round merrily to the east, I get a sma’ share o’ what’s gaun; but just look at that yird, sir,—as bonnie a healthy yird as ane could delight to lie in;—neist, look at that spear,—a fortnight’s rust upon that dibble! Mind, I downa complain;—*Live, and let live*, say I!

"‘But what’s the use of talkin’ sae to a life-like, graceless, thochtless, bairn-getting parish?—the feck o’ whom, after having lived on the fat o’ the kintra-side, naething will sair, but they maun gang up to the town to lay their banes amang the gentles, and creesh some hungry yird wi’ their marrow! The fa’ o’ the leaf is come and gane; an’ saving some twa or three consumptions—for whilk the Lord be thankit, as a sma’ fend—tak the parish a’ ower head—fraz head to tail—and for ane that gaes out at my gate-end, ye’ll find a score come in at the howdie’s!”

*"Damna famæ majora quam quæ astimari possint."**

"‘I hae lost my Gaelic, sir; but ye speak like a sensible man. The fame o’ the place is just as ye say, there’s ower mony *merry pows in’t*. But see, there’s a sober pow, wi’ a siller clasp on’t.”

* The loss of reputation is greater than can be reckoned.

"With all due gravity, may I ask, whose property was that?"

"Hech, man! that's a skeigh tune for a dry whistle; sae, gin ye please, we'll tak our morning first."

So saying, he took his spade, and cutting steps in the side of the grave he was digging, he mounted to the surface; then, walking off a few paces, I saw him strike some dark substance lying on a flat stone; when, to my astonishment, a Flibbertigibbet-looking creature unrolled itself, from a mortcloth, at my feet.

"Hannibal Grub, my 'prentice, sir, at your service.—Hawney, tak the shanker ower to Jenny Nailor's, an' bring a dooble-floorer to the gentleman; an', hear ye, say it's for the minister's wife—fourpenny strunt, Grub, mind—nae pinchin'. If ye meet his reverence, honest man, tell him ye're gaun for oil to the cruizie."

"That auld wizzened pow is a' that's left o' the Laird o' Nettleriggs. It was lying face down, when I cam till't this morning, maist horrif' to see; for he maun hae turned in his kist, or been buried back upwards! It was ae blawy, sleety nicht, about this time twal-year, when I was sent for express to speak wi' the laird. Thinkin' that he maybe wanted the family lair snodded out, or a new coat o' paint to the stauchels, I set out without delay. I had four mile o' gate to gang on a darksome dreary road, an' I couldna but say that I felt mair eerie than I had ever felt in my ain plantin', amang honest folk. Sae, wi' your leave, I'll just put in ane o' Jenny's screws, afore I gae ony farther. Here's wishing better acquaintance to us, sir.—Is this frae the 'Broon Coo,' Grub?"

"Ay!" groaned an unearthly voice, as if the "Broon Cow" herself had spoken.

"Weel, I gaed, an' I better gaed. 'The wind blew as 'twad blown its last,' the fitfu' changes o' the shrouded moon

threw flitting shadows across my path; —whiles like a muckle colley, and syne as if I stood on the brink o' a dreadfu' precipice, when I wad then stand still, till the moon shone again. The bleach-field dogs sent round their lang, uncanny bodings; the vera cocks crawled,—sic horror had the time; the last leaves o' hairst were driftin' an' clatterin' amang my feet—whiles hittin' me like a whup on the face; or tappin' me on the back, as if ane wad say, 'Saunders, this is death!' when I wad then stand stock-still again, my knees fechtin' an' thumpin' at ane anither, and my teeth gaun like a watchman's rattle; while noos and than, the wind wad howl and birr, as if the Prince o' Air himsel were pipin' to the clouds. I ne'er doubted thae things to be the bodings o' death; but I thocht sic feydoms might hae been better wared on a muckle better man than me. At length I got to the house-door, as the laird's messan began to bark.

"Look to the door, Peggy!" quo' the gudewife.

"Ay, mither. Jock, look to the door for your mither, will ye no?"

"Look till't yersel! Can I gang, when I'm greetin' this way?—Pate—look to the door!"

"I'm greetin' too," says Pate.

"Peggy Mucklewham, will ye no look to the door, for your deein' faither's sake?"

"Tuts!" quo' Peggy, "Can ye not get up yersel—fashin' folk?"

"Weel, I then got entrance—the sneck being cannily lifted, an' the bairns makin' a breeinge into a hidin' corner, until, by the light o' the fire, they kent my face.

"Ou, it's auld Saunders, as sure as death. Ay, man, my faither's real ill—he's just gaspin', and that's a'! Hear till that—that's him whistlin'! Hae ye no brought Towie wi' ye? Man, Pate and me wad hae'n sic grand fun chasin' the mawkins, when my mither's at the kirk the morn."

"Are ye sorry to lose your faither, bairnies?" quo' I.

"Ou, ay," quo' Pate, "but I dinna like to look at him, he maks sic awfu' faces, man; but I hae been thrang greetin', sin' four o'clock even on—twice as muckle's Jock!"

"A lang deep groan now was heard from out o' the spence, whaur the laird was lying; and the bairnies, in a fricht, ran screeching to anither apartment, leaving the youngest wean by the fire-side, rowed in ane o' the auld man's black coats.

"Gude save us, lammie!" quo' I, "is there naebody tending your puir auld faither? Whaur's uncle, lammie? and aunty? and your minnie, lammie?" I mind weel the bit bairnie's answer—"Unkey a' doon—aunty a' doon—daddy a' doon!"

Mrs Mucklewham was a stout burdly quean, like a house-end; and the laird was just a bit han'fu' o' a cratur—a bit sixteen-to-the-dizzen body. They were a pair o' whom it was said, by the kintra-side, that they had married afore they had courted. The laird was an auld man when he brought hame a woman thirty years younger than himself;—auld folk are twice bairns, and he was beginning to need nursing. It's wonderfu' to think how little a matter hinders gentle-bred folk frae getting on in the world! A' that Jenny Screameger wantit o' the complete leddy was the bit dirty penny siller; an' sae they were joined thegither, without its ever being mentioned in the contract, or understood, that they bound and obliged themselves to hae a heartliking for ane another!

"She had been keepit by the gudeman geyan short by the tether; sae as her hale life was made just a dull round till her—o' rising and lying down—eating, drinking, and sleeping—feeding the pigs, milking the cow—flyting the servant—and skelping the weans a' round;—unless when she dreamed o' burials, or saw a spale at the candle—

or heard o' a murder committed in the neighbourhood—or a marriage made or broken aff—or a criminal to suffer on the gallows; till at her advanced time o' life it was grown just as necessar' that food should be gotten for her mind's maintenance, as it was for her body's.

"This is a sair time for ye, Mrs Mucklewham," quo' I, as she cam ben frae her bedroom gauntin'.

"Hey! ho! hy! Saunders—I haena closed an ee thaet twa lang nichts! But I hear there's something gaun to be dune noo—Hey! ho! hy!"

"I stappit ben wi' her to the laird's room; and I saw in his face he was bespoken. Everything was laid out in the room, comfortable and in apple-pie order, befitting the occasion. The straughtin' board, on whilk his death's ee was fixed, stood up against the wa'; here lay a bowt o' tippeny knittin' for binding his limbs, and as mony black preens as wad hae stockit a shop; there hung his dead shirt, o' new hamespun claih, providently airing afore the fire.

"Gin ye be thrang, Saunders, ye needna wait on the gudeman—ye ken his length—and gie him a deep biel," quo' the gudewife; when just as I laid my hand upon his brow, he fixed his ee upon me like a hawk; an' after anither kirkyard groan—the like I never heard from mortal man—he seemed reviving, an' new strength to be filling his limbs, as he rose up on his elbow, on the bed, and laid his other hand on mine—sic an icy hand as I never felt abune grund!—thus speaking to me in his seeming agony:

"Saunders, do not pray for me; I have been long a dead man; lay your hand upon my bosom, and you will feel the flames of hell ascending to my soul!" I laid my hand upon his heart, and I declare, sir, I thocht the flesh wad hae cindered aff the finger-banes! The heat was just awfu'!

"I was made life-renter of a sum

which at my decease descends to the younger branches of my father's family ; and my life has been miserable to myself—a burden to others—and my death the desire of my kindred !'

" 'He's raving, Saunders—he's clean raving ! An' I canna persuade him he's a deein' man,' quo' Mrs Mucklewham, as she stapped forrit wi' a red bottle, to gie him a quatenin' dram.

" 'Haud, haud !' quo' I, 'he'll do without it,' as the laird, raising his voice, began again to speak :

" 'I had but one friend in the world,—the highwayman that robbed me, and then laid my skull open with the butt-end of his whip ;—would to God he had made me a beggar, and saved my soul ! I had no worse wish to bestow on him than that he might be a life-renter for his poor relations. Saunders, look on the face of that unfeeling woman—more horrible to me than death itself ;—look on my deserted death-bed, and my chamber decorated like a charnel house ? Horrible as the sensation of death is, as his iron gropings are stealing round my heart, there is yet to me a sight more hideous, and which I thank God I shall be spared witnessing—*when the dead shall bury the dead !*'

" Mrs Mucklewham broke frae my weak hand—wrenched open his locked teeth, and emptied the hale contents down his throat—grunds an' a'—o' his ' quatenin' draught ;' I felt myself a' *ug*, as I saw his teeth gnash thegither, an' his lips close in quateness for ever.

" I gaed out wi' the mortclaith ; I saw the gathering ; I was present when the bread an' dram service were waiting for the grace :—' Try ye't, John,' quo' ane. ' Begin yersel ; ye're dead sweer,' quo' anither ; when I heard ane break down an' auld prayer into twa blessin's. Some were crackin' about the rise o' oats ; some about the fa' o' hay. His bit callans were there in rowth o' clraith ; auld elbows of coats mak gude breek-

knees for bairns. I saw the coffin carried out to the hearse without ane admiring its bonnie gilding—quite sair and melancholy to see ! I saw the bedral bodies, wi' their light-coloured gravats, an' rusty black cowls, stuffing their wide pouches—maist pitifull, I thought, to behold. Then I saw the house-servants, wha had drunk deepest o' the cup o' woe ; till sae mista'en were their notions o' sorrow, that they were just by the conception o' the mind o' man. Then there was sic a clanjamphry o' beggars ; some praising the laird for virtues that they wha kenned him kent they were failings in him ; an' ither were crackin' o' familiarities wi' him, that might hae been painful to his nearest o' kin to hear : there was but sma' grief when they first gathered ; but when they learned there was nae awmous for them, I trow ony tears that were shed at the burial were o' their drappin'.

" There was the witless idewit Jock Murra, mair mournfu' to see than a' that was sad there ; when just as the hearse began to move on, he liltit up a rantin' sang—

Mony an awmous I've got.

I lookit round me when the company began to move on frae the house wi' the hearse ; but as I shall answer, sir, there wasna ae face that lookit sad but might as well hae smiled ; the vera look o't, in a Christian land, broucht the saut tears gushing frae my ain auld dry withered ee !

" In compliance with the friends' request, as it was a lang road to come back, his will had been read afore the interment ; when sae muckle was left to ae hospit', an' sae muckle to anither, as if the only gude he had ever done was reserved for the day o' his burial ; or like ane wha delays his letter till after the mail shuts, and then pays thrice the sum to overtake the coach. It was the certainty o' thae things that made it the maist mournfu' plantin' I e'er made ; an' I threw the

yird on him, as he was let down by stranger hands (for the friends excused themselves frae gaun ony farther, after they had heard his will), and happit him up, wi' a heavier heart than on

the morning when I took my ain wifie frae my side, an' laid her in the clay.—You'll excuse me, sir ; here's 'success to trade !'”—“*The Auld Kirk Yard.*”

THE FAIRY BRIDE:

A TRADITIONARY TALE.

A SHORT time before the rising of the Presbyterians, which terminated in the rout at Pentland, a young gentleman of the name of Elliot had been called by business to Edinburgh. On his way homeward, he resolved to pay a visit to an old friend named Scott, whose residence was either upon the banks of the Tweed or some of its larger tributaries,—for on this point the tradition is not very distinct. Elliot stopped at a small house of entertainment not far from Scott's mansion, in order to give his parting directions to a servant he was despatching home with some commissions.

The signs of the times had not altogether escaped the notice of our hero. The people were quiet, but reserved, and their looks expressed anything but satisfaction. In Edinburgh there were musterings and inspections of troops, and expresses to and from London were hourly departing and arriving. As Elliot travelled along, he had more than once encountered small parties of military reconnoitring the country, or hastening to some post which had been assigned them. Fewer labourers were to be seen in the fields than was usual at the season. The cottars lounged before their doors, and gazed after the passing warriors with an air of sullen apathy. There was no violence or disturbance on the part of the people,—there had as yet been no arrests,—but it was evident to the most careless

that hostile suspicion was rapidly taking the place of that inactive dislike which had previously existed between the governors and the governed.

It was natural that in such a condition of the national temper, affairs of state should form the chief subject of gossip around the fireside of a country inn. Elliot was not surprised, therefore, while sitting at the long deal table, giving directions to his servant, to hear the name of his friend frequent in the mouths of the peasantry. It was a matter of course that at such a period the motions and inclinations of a wealthy and active landholder of old family should be jealously watched. But it struck him that Scott's name was always uttered in a low, hesitating tone, as if the speakers were labouring under a high degree of awe. He continued, therefore, some time after he had dismissed his attendant, sitting as if lost in thought, but anxiously listening to the desultory conversation dropping around him, like the few shots of a distant skirmish. The allusions of the peasants were chiefly directed to his friend's wife. She was beautiful and kind, but there was an unearthly light in her dark eye. Then there was a dark allusion to a marriage on the hill-side,—far from human habitation,—to the terror of the clergyman who officiated, at meeting so lovely a creature in so lonely a place. The Episcopalian predilections of the family of Scott were

not passed unnoticed. And it seemed universally admitted that the house had been given over to the glamour and fascination of some unearthly being. The power of a leader so connected, in the impending strife, was the subject of dark forebodings.

Rather amused to find his old crony become a person of such consequence, Elliot discharged his reckoning, mounted his steed, and on reaching Scott's residence, was warmly and cheerfully welcomed. He was immediately introduced to the lady, whom he regarded with a degree of attention which he would have been ashamed to confess to himself was in some degree owing to the conversation he had lately overheard. She was a figure of a fairy size, delicately proportioned, with not one feature or point of her form to which objection could be urged. Her rich brown hair clustered down her neck, and lay in massive curls upon her bosom. Her complexion was delicate in the extreme, and the rich blood mantled in her face at every word. Her eyes were a rich brownish hazel, and emitted an almost preternatural light, but there was nothing ungentle in their expression. The honeymoon had not elapsed, and she stood before the admiring traveller in all the beauty of a bride—the most beautiful state of woman's existence, when, to the unfolding delicate beauty of girlhood is superadded the flush of a fuller consciousness of existence, the warmth of affection which dare now utter itself unchecked, the first half-serious, half-playful assumption of matronly dignity. After a brief interchange of compliment with her guest, she left the apartment, either because "the house affairs did call her thence," or because she wished to leave the friends to the indulgence of an unrestrained confidential conversation.

"A perfect fairy queen," said Elliot, as the door closed behind her.

"So you have already heard that

silly story?" answered his host. "Well! I have no right to complain, for I have only myself to thank for it."

Elliot requested that he would explain his meaning, and he in compliance narrated his "whole course of wooing."

"I was detained abroad, as you well know, for some years after his Majesty's restoration, partly on account of the dilapidated state of my fortunes, and partly because I wished to prosecute the career of arms I had commenced. It is now about nine months since I returned to my native country. It was a gloomy day as I approached home. You remember the footpath which strikes across the hill behind the house, from the bed of the stream which mingles, about a mile below us, with that on whose banks we now are. Where it separates from the public road, I gave my horse to the servant, intending to pursue the by-path alone, resolved that no one should watch my emotions when I again beheld the home of my fathers. I was looking after the lad, when I heard the tread of horses close behind me. On turning, I saw a tall, elderly gentleman, of commanding aspect, and by his side a young lady upon a slender milk-white palfrey. I need not describe her; you have seen her to-day. I was struck with the delicacy of her features, the sweet smile upon her lips, and the living fire that sparkled from her eyes. I gazed after her until a turning of the road concealed her from my view.

"It was in vain that I inquired among my relations and acquaintances. No person was known in the neighbourhood such as I described her. The impression she left upon me, vivid though it was at the moment, had died away, when one day, as I was walking near the turn of the road where I had lost her, she again rode past me with the same companion. The sweet smile, the glance of the eye, were heightened this time by a blush of recognition. The pair were soon lost to me round

the elbow of the road. I hurried on, but they had disappeared. The straggling trees which obscured the view, ceased at a bridge which stood a couple of gun-shots before me. Ere I could reach it, I caught a glimpse of the companions. They were at the edge of the stream, a little way above the bridge—the horses were drinking. I pressed onward, but before I had cleared the intervening trees and reached the bridge, they had once more disappeared. There was a small break in the water immediately beneath the place where they had stood. For a moment, I thought that I must have mistaken its whiteness for the white palfrey, but the glance I had got of them was too clear to have been an illusion. Yet no road led in that direction. I examined the banks on both sides of the river, but that on which I saw them was too hard to receive a hoof-print, and the opposite bank was loose shingle, which refused to retain it when made. The exceeding beauty of the maiden, the mysterious nature of her disappearance, the irritable humour into which I had worked myself by conjectures and an unavailing search, riveted her impression upon my memory. I traversed the country telling my story, and making incessant inquiry. In vain! No one knew of such a person. The peasants began to look strangely on me, and whisper in each other's ears, that I had been deluded by some Nixy. And many were the old prophecies regarding my family remembered—or manufactured—for the occasion.

“Five months passed away in vain pursuit. My pertinacity was beginning to relax, when one evening, returning from a visit to our friend Whitelee, I heard a clashing of swords on the road before me. Two fellows ran off as I rode hastily up, leaving a gentleman, who had vigorously defended himself against their joint assault. ‘Are you hurt, sir?’ was my first inquiry. ‘I fear I am,’ replied the stranger, whom

I immediately recognised as the companion of the mysterious beauty. ‘Can I assist you?’ He looked earnestly at me, and with an expression of hesitation on his countenance. ‘Henry Scott, you are a man of honour.’ He paused, but immediately resumed, ‘I have no choice, and I dare trust a soldier. Lend me your arm, sir. My dwelling is not far from here.’ I accompanied him, he leaning heavily upon me, for the exertion of the combat had shaken his frame, and the loss of blood weakened him. We followed the direction he indicated for nearly half an hour round the trackless base of a hill, until we came in sight of one of those old gray towers which stud our ravines. ‘There,’ said my companion, pointing to the ruin. I recognised it immediately; it stood not far distant from the place where he and his fair fellow-traveller had disappeared, and had often been examined by me, but always in vain.

“Turning an angle of the building, we approached a heap of *debris*, which in one part encumbered its base. Putting aside some tangled briers which clustered around, he showed me a narrow entry between the ruins and the wall. Passing up to this, he stopped before a door, and gave three gentle knocks; it opened, and we were admitted into a rude, narrow vault. It was tenanted, as I had anticipated, by his fair companion. As soon as her alarm at seeing her father return exhausted, bleeding, and in company with a stranger, was stilled, and the old man’s wound dressed, he turned to explain to me the circumstances in which I found him. His story was brief. He was of good family; had killed a cadet of a noble house, and was obliged to save himself from its resentment by hiding in ruins and holes of the earth. In all his wanderings his gentle daughter had never quitted his side.

“I need not weary you with the further details of our growing acquaint-

ance. It is the common story of a young man and a young woman thrown frequently into each other's company in a lonely place. But, oh ! tame though it may appear to others, the mere memory of the three months of my life which followed is ecstasy ! I saw her daily—in that unfrequented spot there was small danger of intrusion, and she dared range the hillside freely. We walked, and sat, and talked together in the birchen wood beneath the tower, and we felt our love unfold itself as their leaves spread out to the advancing summer. There was no check in the tranquil progress of our affections—no jealousies, for there was none to be jealous of. Unmarked, it overpowered us both. It swelled upon us, like the tide of a breathless summer day, purely and noiselessly.

"A few weeks ago her father took me aside, and prefacing that he had marked with pleasure our growing attachment, asked me if I had sufficient confidence in my own constancy to pledge myself to be for life an affectionate and watchful guardian of his child ? He went on to say, that means of escaping from the country had been provided, and offers of promotion in the Spanish service made to him. Your own heart will suggest my answer ; and I left him, charged to return after night-fall with a clergyman. Our good curate is too much attached to the family to refuse me anything. To him I revealed my story. At midnight he united me to Ellen, and scarcely was the ceremony over, when Sir James tore himself away, leaving his weeping child almost insensible in my arms.

"Two gentlemen, who accompanied Sir James to the coast, were witnesses of the marriage. It was therefore unnecessary to let any of the household into the secret. You may guess their astonishment, therefore, when, having seen the curate and me ride up the solitary gien alone under cloud of night,

(9)

they saw us return in the course of a few hours with a lady, who was introduced to them as their mistress. Great has been their questioning, and great has been the delight of our jolly priest to mystify them with dark hints of ruined towers, hillsides opening, and such like. The story of the Nixy has been revived, too, and Ellen is looked on by many with a superstitious awe. I rather enjoyed the joke at first, but now begin to fear, from the deep root the folly seems to have taken, that it may one day bear evil fruits for my delicate girl."

His augury of evil was well-founded, but the blight fell upon his own heart. As soon as he heard of the rising in the west, he joined the royal forces at the head of his tenantry. During his absence, and while the storm of civil war was raging over the land, his cherished one was seized with the pangs of premature labour. She lay in the same grave with her child, before her husband could reach his home. The remembrance of what she had undergone, her loneliness amid the tempests of winter, her isolation from all friends, had so shaken her frame that the first attack of illness snapped the thread of life. Her sufferings were comparatively short. But the widower ! He sought to efface the remembrance of his loss in active service. Wherever insubordination showed itself, he prayed for employment. The Presbyterians learned at last to consider him as the embodied personification of persecution. The story of his mysterious marriage got wind. He was regarded as one allied to, and acting under, the influence of unholy powers. He knew it, and, in the bitterness of his heart, he rejoiced to be marked out by their fear and terror, as one who had nothing in common with them. His own misery, and this outcast feeling, made him aspire to be ranked in their minds as a destroying spirit. The young, gallant, and

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kind-hearted soldier became the most relentless persecutor of the followers of the Covenant. Even yet does his memory, and that of his Fairy Bride, live in

popular tradition like a thunderstorm, gloomy and desolating, yet not without lambent flashes of more than earthly beauty.—*Edinburgh Literary Journal*.

THE LOST LITTLE ONES.

CHAPTER I.

I HAVE a story to tell relative to what happened to Sir George and Lady Beaumont, the excellent and beloved proprietors of the Hermitage, in a neighbouring county. At the period of which I speak, their family consisted of five children, three sons and two daughters; and their eldest, a daughter called Charlotte, was then nine years of age. She was a remarkably clever child, and a great favourite of her parents; but her mother used to remark that her vivacity required checking, and, notwithstanding her partiality for her, she never failed to exercise it when it became necessary. It would have been well had others acted equally judiciously.

It happened one day, as the family were going to sit down to dinner, that Charlotte did not make her appearance. The maid was sent up to her room, but she was not there. The dinner-bell was ordered to be rung again, and a servant was at the same time dispatched to the garden; and this having been done, Sir George and his lady proceeded with the other youngsters to the dining-room, not doubting but Charlotte would be home immediately. The soup, however, was finished without any tidings of her, when, Lady Beaumont seeming a little uneasy, Sir George assured her there was no cause for alarm, as Charlotte would probably be found under her favourite gooseberry

bush. Lady Beaumont seemed to acquiesce in this, and appeared tolerably composed, till the servant who had been sent to the garden came back to say that she was not there. Sir George insisted that the man had probably passed her without seeing her, the garden being so large; but the servant averred that he had been through the whole of it, and had shouted repeatedly Miss Charlotte's name.

"Oh!" exclaimed Sir George, "she has pretended not to hear you, Robert, and, I daresay, will be back immediately, now that she has succeeded in giving you a race round the garden; however," added he, "you may go back again, and take Samuel and Thomas with you, and if you do not find her hiding herself in the garden, you may take a peep into the shrubbery, as she may slip in there, on seeing you returning; and as you go along, you may call to her, and say that dinner waits, and that Lady Beaumont is much displeased with her being out at this time of the day. And now, my love," continued Sir George to his lady, "just let us proceed with dinner, and compose yourself."

Lady Beaumont forced a smile, and busied herself in attending to her young ones; but her own plate was neglected, and her eyes were continually turned towards the window which looked upon the lawn.

"What can keep Robert, papa?" said Charles to his father.

"Indeed, my boy," said Sir George, "I do not know. Charlotte," continued he to Lady Beaumont, "do you see anything?"

"They are all coming back," exclaimed Lady Beaumont, "and alone!" and she rose hastily from her chair.

Robert and the other men now entered, and reported that they had searched every spot in the garden and the shrubbery, but without finding any trace of her; and the people who had been working there all day had seen nothing of her. Lady Beaumont now became excessively alarmed, and Sir George himself was far from easy, though he appeared before his lady to treat the matter lightly.

"She'll have gone up to the cottages to see her god-brother," said Sir George; "or perhaps have wandered over to the mill."

"And if she has fallen into the stream!", ejaculated Lady Beaumont.

"Now, dear Charlotte, do not needlessly alarm yourself; there's no fear but we shall soon find her."

"God grant it!" said Lady Beaumont, "but my mind misgives me sadly."

Messengers were now dispatched to the cottages, and to the mill, and in various other directions around the Hermitage, but all came back without having obtained any tidings of the missing child. Sir George, now very seriously alarmed, gave private directions for having the fish-pond, and the stream which ran at the bottom of the garden, carefully dragged. It was done, but nothing was found. The whole household was now in motion, and as the story spread, the tenants and neighbours came pouring from all quarters, with offers to search the country round in every direction; so much was Sir George esteemed and beloved by all classes. Their offers were thankfully

accepted, and after choosing their ground, and dividing themselves into different parties, they set out from the Hermitage, resolved, as they said, to find the little one, if she was above ground. Sir George and his lady went out as the parties set off in their different directions, and continued walking up and down the avenue, that they might the sooner perceive the approach of those bringing intelligence; but hour after hour elapsed, and no one came. Sir George then proposed that Lady Beaumont should go home and see the young ones put to bed. She did so, but soon returned again.

"I know," said she, answering Sir George's look, "that you wished me to remain at home and rest myself; but what rest can there be for me, till we have some intelligence of"— and her voice faltered.

"Well, well, then," said Sir George, pressing her arm in his, "let us take a few more turns—surely we must hear something soon."

The people now began to come dropping in from different quarters, but all had the same melancholy answer—no one had seen or heard of her. The hearts of the poor parents were sadly depressed, for daylight was fast closing in, and almost all those who had set off on the search had now returned, and amongst them their faithful servant Robert, principally from anxiety to learn if any intelligence had been obtained of his favourite. But when he found that all had returned unsuccessful, he declared his determination to continue the search during the night; and he, and a good many others who joined him, set off soon afterwards, being supplied with torches and lanterns of various descriptions.

This determination gave new hopes to the inmates of the Hermitage, and Lady Beaumont endeavoured to rally her spirits; but when at length, as daylight broke, Robert and his party returned

alone, and without intelligence, nature exhausted gave way, and she fell senseless in her husband's arms.

In the morning Robert tapped at Sir George's door, and communicated quietly to him his recollecting to have seen a rather suspicious-looking woman near the Hermitage the previous day, and that he had just heard from a neighbour, that a woman of that description, with a child in her arms, had been seen passing to the eastward. Orders were immediately given for a pursuit on horseback ;—Sir George giving directions to bring in every one whom they suspected ; saying, that he would compensate those who had reason to complain of being used in this way. But, though many were brought to the Hermitage, and large rewards were offered, yet week after week passed over without bringing them the smallest intelligence of their lost little one.

Some months had elapsed since their child had disappeared, and the minds of the parents had become comparatively composed, when their attention was one evening attracted by the appearance of an unusual number of people in the grounds below the terrace, and whose motions it seemed difficult to understand.

"What can have brought so many people there ?" asked Lady Beaumont ; "and what are they doing?"

"Indeed, my love, I do not know," said Sir George, "but there's Robert, passing down the walk, and he will tell us ;" and he called to Robert, who, however, seemed rather not to wish to hear ; but Sir George called again, and so loudly, that Robert was obliged to stop. "Robert," said Sir George, "what do these people seek in the low grounds there ?"

"They are looking for — of Widow Watt's, your honour," said Robert.

"Did you hear what it was, my dear ?" said Sir George to his lady.

"No," said Lady Beaumont ; "but probably her pet lamb, or more likely her cow, has strayed."

"Is it her cow that's amissing, Robert ?" called Sir George.

"No, your honour," said Robert.

"Her lamb then, or some other beast ?" asked Sir George.

"Naething o' the kind, your honour," answered Robert.

"What then ?" demanded Sir George, in a tone that showed he would be answered.

"Why, your honour, they say that wee Leezie Watt's no come hame, and the folk are gaun to seek for her ; and nae doubt they'll soon find her," added Robert, stepping hastily away to join them.

Sir George had felt Lady Beaumont's convulsive grasp of his arm, and gently led her to a seat, where after a while she became more composed, and was able to walk to the Hermitage.

"And now," said she, on reaching the door, "think no more of me, but give all your thoughts to the most likely means of restoring the poor child to its widowed parent."

"Spoken like yourself," said Sir George, pressing her hand ; and immediately flew to give directions for making the most thorough and effectual search. But this search, alas ! proved equally unavailing as the former one, and no trace whatever could be found of the widow's child.

The story, joined to the disappearance of Sir George's daughter, made a great noise, and created considerable alarm in that part of the country ; and this alarm was increased fourfold, when, in three weeks afterwards, another child was lost. The whole population now turned out, and people were stationed to watch in different places by night and by day. But no discovery was made ; and, to add to their horror, child after child disappeared, till the number of the lost little ones amounted

to seven. Parents no longer durst trust their children for a moment out of their sight. They went with them to school, and also went to bring them back again ; and these precautions had the best effect, many weeks having elapsed without anything unpleasant happening. The neighbours now began to congratulate each other on the probability, or rather certainty, that those who had inflicted so much misery in that quarter of the country had gone somewhere else, and that they would now be able to live in some kind of peace and comfort. But this peaceful state was not destined to continue.

One of Sir George's best tenants, David Williams, had been busily engaged in ploughing the whole day, and was thinking of unyoking and going home, when his wife looked over the dyke, and asked him how he was coming on. "But whaur," continued she, "are the bairns? are they at the t'ither end o' the field?"

"The bairns!" said David, "I haena seen them; but is't time for their being back frae the school?"

"Time!" exclaimed his wife; "muckle mair than time, they should hae been hame an hour syne; and that brought me out to see gif they were wi' you, as you said ye wad may be lowse and gang to meet them!"

"'Od, I was unco keen," said David, "to finish this bit lea, and had nae notion it was sae far in the day."

"Preserve us!" exclaimed Matty, "gif anything has happened to them!"

"Nonsense," cried David, "when there's three o' them thegither; but, here," says he, "tak ye the beasts hame, and I'se be off, and will soon be back wi' them; sae dinna vex yoursel."

"I hope it may be sae," said Matty, "but my heart misgies me sair—how-ever, dinna wait to speak about it."

David Williams was not long of reaching the school, where he learned from the mistress, that his children had

remained a good while after the rest, expecting him to come for them; but that they had at length set out to meet him, as she understood, and that they had been gone above an hour, and she thought they would have been home long ago. "But, perhaps," continued she, "they may have called in at their aunt's, for I heard them speaking of her to-day."

David took a hasty leave, and posted away to his sister's, but the children had not been there, nor had any one seen them. His brother-in-law, John Maxwell, seeing his distress, proposed taking one road, while David took the other, towards home, and to meet at the corner of the planting near his house. They did so, and arrived nearly at the same time, and each without having heard or seen anything of the children. David Williams was now in a perfect agony, and the perspiration ran like water from his forehead.

"Maybe they're hame already," said his brother-in-law; "I daurna gang up mysel to speir, bit we'll send yon herd laddie."

John went, and gave the boy his directions to ask, first, if David Williams was at hame, and then to ask, cannie-like, if the weans were in. He then sat down beside David, keeping his eye on the cottage, when he sees Matty come fleeing out like one distracted.

"Down, David! down wi' your head, man," cried John, "that she mayna see us." But Matty had got a glimpse of them, and came right down on them as fast as she could run.

"Whaur's my bairns, David?" cried she; "whaur's our bonnie bairns? I kent weel, whenever the callant askit if they were come hame, what was the meaning o't. They're lost, they're lost!" continued the poor woman, wringing her hands, "and what'll become o' me?"

"Now Matty, Matty, my ain wife,"

said David, “dinna ye gang on at that gate, and hurt yoursel ; naebody but John and me has been looking for them, and we’ve come straught hame, and there’s a heap o’ither ways, ye ken, that they may hae gane by.”

“Ay, ower mony—ower mony ways,

I’m doubtin’,” said Matty mournfully, shaking her head ; “but dinna let us put aff time this gate. Rin ye baith an’ alarm the neebours, and I’ll awa to the Hermitage, where we’re sure to get help ; and God grant it mayna end wi’ mine as it did wi’ ithers !”

CHAPTER II.

“By heavens!” exclaimed Sir George, while the blood mounted to his forehead, “but this is infamous. Ring the alarm bell,” continued he, “and let all my tenants and domestics turn out on foot or on horseback, and form as large a circle round the place as possible ; and let them bring out all their dogs, in case this horrid business is caused by some wild animal or another which may have broken from its keeper ; and Robert,” continued Sir George, “see that no strangers are allowed to pass the circle, on any pretence whatever, without my having seen and examined them.”

These orders were immediately obeyed, and the alarm having spread far and near, an immense body of people quickly assembled, and commenced a most determined and active search, gradually narrowing their circle as they advanced.

Lady Beaumont, ascending to the top of the Hermitage, which commanded a view of the whole surrounding country, watched their proceedings with the most intense interest ; trusting that the result would be not only the restoration of David Williams’ children, but the discovery also of the others which had disappeared, and of her own little one amongst the number. At times, single horsemen would dash from the circle at a gallop, and presently return with some man or woman for Sir George’s examination ; and while that lasted, Lady Beaumont’s heart beat fast and thick ; but the dismissal of the people,

and the re-commencement of the search, painfully convinced her that no discovery had yet been made ; and sighing deeply, she again turned her eyes on the searchers. At other times, the furious barking of the dogs, and the running of the people on foot towards the spot, seemed to promise some discovery ; but the bursting out from the plantation of some unfortunate calf or sheep, showed that the people had been merely hastening to protect them from the unruly animals which had been brought together, and who, having straggled away from their masters, were under no control.

The day was now fast closing in, and the circle had become greatly diminished in extent ; and when, in a short time afterwards, it had advanced on all sides from the plantations, and nothing but a small open space divided the people from each other, Sir George directed them to halt, and, after thanking them for what they had done, he requested them to rest themselves on the grass till refreshments could be brought from the Hermitage, after partaking of which they had best move homewards, as it seemed in vain to attempt anything more till next day. He then took leave of them, and hurried home to the Hermitage, from whence a number of people were soon seen returning with the promised refreshments.

Having finished what was set before them, and sufficiently rested themselves, most of them departed, having first declared their readiness to turn out the

moment they were wanted. But when his friends proposed to David Williams his returning home, he resolutely refused, declaring his determination to continue his search the whole night ; and the poor man's distress seemed so great, that a number of the people agreed to accompany him. Robert, on being applied to, furnished them, from the Hermitage, with a quantity of torches and lanterns ; and the people themselves, having got others from the cottages in the neighbourhood, divided into bands, and, fixing on John Maxwell's house for intelligence to be sent to, parted in different ways on their search.

At first all were extremely active, and no place the least suspicious was passed by ; but as the night advanced their exertions evidently flagged, and many of them began to whisper to each other that it was in vain to expect doing any good in the midst of darkness ; and, as the idea gained ground, the people gradually separated from each other, and returned to their homes, promising to be ready early in the morning to renew the search.

"An' now, David," said John Maxwell, "let's be gaun on."

"No to my house," cried David ;—"not to my ain house. I canna face Matty, and them no found yet."

"Aweel, then," said John, "suppose ye gang hame wi' me, and fling yersel down for a wee ; an' then we'll be ready to start again at gray daylight."

"An' what will Matty think in the meantime ?" answered David. "But gang on, gang on, however," he added, "an' I'se follow ye."

John Maxwell, glad that he had got him this length, now led the way, occasionally making a remark to David, which was very briefly answered, so that John, seeing him in that mood, gave up speaking to him, till, coming at length to a bad step, and warning David of it, to which he got no answer, he hastily turned round and found that

he was gone. He immediately went back, calling to David as loud as he could, but all to no purpose. It then occurred to him that David had probably changed his mind, and had gone homewards ; and, at any rate, if he had taken another direction, that it was in vain for him to attempt following him, the light he carried being now nearly burnt out. He therefore made the best of his way to his own house.

In the meantime, poor David Williams, who could neither endure the thought of going to his own house nor to his brother-in-law's, and had purposely given him the slip, continued to wander up and down without well knowing where he was, or where he was going to, when he suddenly found himself, on coming out of the wood, close to the cottage inhabited by a widow named Elie Anderson.

"I wad gie the world for a drink o' water," said he to himself ; "but the puir creature will hae lain down lang syne, an' I'm sweer to disturb her ;" and as he said this, he listened at the door, and tried to see in at the window, but he could neither see nor hear anything, and was turning to go away, when he thought he saw something like the reflection of a light from a hole in the wall, on a tree which was opposite. It was too high for him to get at it without something to stand upon ; but after searching about, he got part of an old hen-coop, and placing it to the side of the house, he mounted quietly on it. He now applied his eye to the hole where the light came through, and the first sight which met his horrified gaze was the body of his eldest daughter, lying on a table quite dead,—a large incision down her breast, and another across it !

David Williams could not tell how he forced his way into the house ; but he remembered bolts and bars crashing before him,—his seizing Elie Anderson, and dashing her from him with all his

might ; and that he was standing gazing on his murdered child when two young ones put out their hands from beneath the bed-clothes.

"There's faither," said the one.

"Oh, faither, faither," said the other, "but I'm glad ye're come, for Nanny's been crying sair, sair, an' she's a' bluiding."

David pressed them to his heart in a perfect agony, then catching them up in his arms, he rushed like a maniac from the place, and soon afterwards burst into John Maxwell's cottage,—his face pale, his eye wild, and gasping for breath.

"God be praised," cried John Maxwell, "the bairns are found ! But where's Nanny ?"

Poor David tried to speak, but could not articulate a word.

"Maybe ye couldna carry them a'?" said John ; "but tell me whaur Nanny is, and I se set out for her momently."

"Ye needna, John, ye needna," said David ; "it's ower late, it's ower late!"

"How sae? how sae?" cried John ; "surely naething mischancy has happened to the lassie?"

"John," said David, "grasping his hand, she's murdered—my bairn's murdered, John !"

"Gude preserve us a'," cried John ; "an' wha's dune it?"

"Elie Anderson," answered David ; "the poor innocent lies yonder a' cut to bits ;" and the unhappy man broke into a passion of tears.

John Maxwell darted off to Saunders Wilson's. "Rise, Saunders !" cried he, thundering at the door ; "haste ye and rise !"

"What's the matter now?" said Saunders.

"Elie Anderson's murdered David's Nanny ; sae haste ye, rise, and yoke your cart, that we may tak her to the towbuith."

Up jumped Saunders Wilson, and up jumped his wife and his weans, and in

a few minutes the story was spread like wildfire. Many a man had lain down so weary with the long search they had made, that nothing they thought would have tempted them to rise again ; but now they and their families sprung from their beds, and hurried, many of them only half-dressed, to John Maxwell's, scarcely believing that the story could be true. Amongst the first came Geordie Turnbull, who proposed that a number of them should set off immediately, without waiting till Saunders Wilson was ready, as Elie Anderson might abscond in the meantime ; and away he went, followed by about a dozen of the most active. They soon reached her habitation, where they found the door open and a light burning.

"Ay, ay," said Geordie, "she's aff, nae doubt, but we'll get her yet. Na, faith," cried he, entering, "she's here still ; but, guedesake, what a sight's this !" continued he, gazing on the slaughtered child. The others now entered, and seemed filled with horror at what they saw.

"Haste ye," cried Geordie, "and fling a sheet or something ower her, that we mayna lose our wits a'thegither. And now, ye wretch," turning to Elie Anderson, "your life shall answer for this infernal deed. Here," continued he, "bring ropes and tie her, and whenever Saunders comes up, we'll off wi' her to the towbuith."

Ropes were soon got, and she was tied roughly enough, and then thrown carelessly into the cart ; but notwithstanding the pain occasioned by her thigh-bone being broken by the force with which David Williams dashed her to the ground, she answered not one word to all their threats and reproaches, till the cart coming on some very uneven ground, occasioned her such exquisite pain, that, losing all command over herself, she broke out into such a torrent of abuse against those who surrounded her, that Geordie Turnbull

would have killed her on the spot, had they not prevented him by main force.

Shortly afterwards they arrived at the prison ; and having delivered her to the jailor, with many strict charges to keep her safe, they immediately returned to assist in the search for the bodies of the other children, who, they had no doubt, would be found in or about her house.

When they arrived there, they found an immense crowd assembled, for the story had spread everywhere ; and all who had lost children, accompanied by their friends and neighbours and acquaintances, had repaired to the spot, and had already commenced digging and searching all round. After working in this way for a long while, without any discovery being made, it was at length proposed to give up the search and return home, when Robin Galt, who was a mason, and who had been repeatedly pacing the ground from the kitchen to the pig-sty, and from the pig-sty to the kitchen, said, "Frien's, I've been considering, and I canna help thinking that there maun be a space no discovered atween the sty and the kitchen, an' I'm unco fond to hae that ascertained."

"We'll sune settle that," says Geordie Turnbull. "Whereabouts should it be?"

"Just there, I think," says Robin.

Geordie immediately drove a stone or two out, so that he could get his hand in.

"Does onybody see my hand frae the kitchen ?" asked he.

"No a bit o't," was the answer.

"Nor frae the sty ?"

"Nor frae that either."

"Then there maun be a space, sure enough," cried Geordie, drawing out one stone after another, till he had made a large hole in the wall. "An' now," said he, "gie me a light ;" and he shoved in a lantern, and looked into

the place. "The Lord preserve us a'" cried he, starting back.

"What is't—what is't ?" cried the people, pressing forward on all sides.

"Look an' see !—look an' see !" he answered ; "they're a' there—a' the murdered weans are there, lying in a raw!"

The wall was torn down in a moment ; and, as he had said, the bodies of the poor innocents were found laid side by side together. Those who entered first gazed on the horrid scene without speaking, and then proceeded to carry out the bodies, and to lay them on the green before the house. It was then that the grief of the unhappy parents broke forth ; and their cries and lamentations, as they recognised their murdered little ones, roused the passions of the crowd to absolute frenzy.

"Hanging's ower gude for her," cried one.

"Let's rive her to coupens," exclaimed another.

A universal shout was the answer ; and immediately the greater part of them set off for the prison, their numbers increasing as they ran, and all burning with fury against the unhappy author of so much misery.

The wretched woman was at this moment sitting with an old crony who had been admitted to see her, and to whom she was confessing what had influenced her in acting as she had done.

"Ye ken," said she, "I haena jist been mysel since a rascal that had a grudge at me put aboot a story of my having made awa wi' John Anderson, wi' the help o' arsenic. I was ta'en up and examined aboot it, and afterwards tried for it, and though I was acquitted, the neebours aye looked on me wi' an evil eye, and avoided me. This drove me to drinking and other bad courses, and it ended in my leaving that part of the kintra, and coming here. But the thing rankled in my mind, and many

a time hae I sat thinkin' on it, till I scarcely kent where I was, or what I was doing. Weel, ae day, as I was sitting at the roadside, near the Hermitage, and very low about it, I heard a voice say, ‘Are you thinking on John Anderson, Elie? Ay, woman,’ said Charlotte Beaumont, for it was her, ‘what a shame in you to poison your own gudeman!’ and she pointed her finger, and hissed at me. When I heard that,” continued Elie, “the whole blood in my body seemed to flee up to my face, an’ my very een were like to start frae my head ; an’ I believe I wad hae killed her on the spot, hadna aye o’ Sir George’s servants come up at the time ; sae I sat mysel doun again, an’ after a lang while, I reasoned mysel, as I thought, into the notion that I shouldna mind what a bairn said ; but I hadna forgotten’t for a’ that.

“Weel, ae day that I met wi’ her near the wood, I tell’t her that it wasna right in her to speak yon gate, an’ didna mean to say ony mair, hadna the lassie gane on ten times waur nor she had done before, and sae angered me, that I gied her a wee bit shake, and then she threatened me wi’ what her faither wad do, and misca’ed me sae sair, that I struck her, and my passion being ance up, I gaed on striking her till I killed her outright. I didna ken for a while that she was dead ; but when I found that it was really sae, I had sense enough left to row her in my apron, an’ to tak her hame wi’ me ; an’ when I had barred the door, I laid her body on a chair, and sat down on my knees beside it, an’ grat an’ wrung my hands a’ night lang.

“Then I began to think what would be done to me if it was found out ; an’ thought o’ pittin’ her into a cunning place, which the man who had the house before me, and who was a great poacher, had contrived to hide his game in ; and when that was done, I was a thought easier, though I couldna

forgie mysel for what I had done, till it cam into my head that it had been the means o’ saving her frae sin, and frae haein’ muckle to answer for ; an’ this thought made me unco happy. At last I began to think that it would be right to save mair o’ them, and that it would atone for a’ my former sins ; an’ this took sic a hold o’ me, that I was aye on the watch to get some ane or ither o’ them by themselves, to dedicate them to their Maker, by marking their bodies wi’ the holy cross :—but oh !” she groaned, “if I hae been wrang in a’ this !”

The sound of the people rushing towards the prison was now distinctly heard ; and both at once seemed to apprehend their object.

“Is there no way of escape, Elie,” asked her friend, wringing her hands.

Elie pointed to her broken thigh, and shook her head. “Besides,” said she, “I know my hour is come.”

The mob had now reached the prison, and immediately burst open the doors. Ascending to the room where Elie was confined, they seized her by the hair, and dragged her furiously downstairs. They then hurried her to the river, and, with the bitterest curses, plunged her into the stream ; but their intention was not so soon accomplished as they had expected ; and one of the party having exclaimed that a witch would not drown, it was suggested, and unanimously agreed to, to burn her. A fire was instantly lighted by the water-side, and when they thought it was sufficiently kindled, they threw her into the midst of it. For some time her wet clothes protected her, but when the fire began to scorch her, she made a strong exertion, and rolled herself off. She was immediately seized and thrown on again ; but having again succeeded in rolling herself off, the mob became furious, and called for more wood for the fire ; and by stirring it on all hands, they raised it into a tremendous blaze.

Some of the most active now hastened to lay hold of the poor wretch, and to toss her into it ; but in their hurry one of them having trod on her broken limb, caused her such excessive pain, that when Geordie Turnbull stooped to assist in lifting her head, she suddenly caught him by the thumb with her teeth, and held him so fast, that he found it impossible to extricate it. She was therefore laid down again, and in many ways tried to force open her mouth, but without other effect than increasing Geordie's agony ; till at length one of them seizing a pointed stick from the fire, and thrusting it into an aperture occasioned by the loss of some of her teeth, the pressure of its sharp point against the roof of her mouth, and the smoke setting her coughing, forced her to relax her hold, when the man's thumb was got out of her grasp terribly lacerated. Immediately thereafter she was tossed in the midst of the flames, and forcibly held there by means of long prongs ; and the fire soon reaching the vital parts, the poor wretch's screams and im-

precations became so horrifying, that one of the bystanders, unable to bear it any longer, threw a large stone at her head, which, hitting her on the temples, deprived her of sense and motion.

Their vengeance satisfied, the people immediately dispersed, having first pledged themselves to the strictest secrecy. Most of them returned home, but a few went back to Elie Anderson's, whose house, and everything belonging to her, had been set on fire by the furious multitude. They then retired, leaving a few men to watch the remains of the children, till coffins could be procured for them. "Never in a' my days," said John Maxwell, when speaking of it afterwards, "did I weary for daylight as I did that night. When the smoke smothered the fire, and it was quite dark, we didna mind sae muckle ; but when a rafter or a bit o' the roof fell in, and a breeze raise, then the fire-light shining on the ghastly faces of the puir wee innocents a' laid in a row,—it was mair than we could weel stand ; and it was mony a day or I was my ainsel again."

CHAPTER III.

NEXT morning the parents met, and it being agreed that all their little ones should be interred in one grave, and that the funeral should take place on the following day, the necessary preparations were accordingly made. In the meantime, Matty went over to her brother John Maxwell, to tell him, if possible, to persuade David Williams not to attend the funeral, as she was sure he could not stand it. "He hadna closed his ee," she said, "since that terrible night, and had neither ate nor drank, but had just wandered up and down between the house and the fields, moaning as if his heart would break." John Maxwell promised to speak to David, but when he did so, he found

him so determined on attending, that it was needless to say any more on the subject.

On the morning of the funeral, David Williams appeared very composed ; and John Maxwell was saying to some of the neighbours that he thought he would be quite able to attend, when word was brought that Geordie Turnbull had died that morning of lock-jaw, brought on, it was supposed, as much from the idea of his having been bitten by a witch, or one that was not canny, as from the injury done to him.

This news made an evident impression on David Williams, and he became so restless and uneasy, and felt himself so unwell, that he at one time

declared he would not go to the funeral ; but getting afterwards somewhat more composed, he joined the melancholy procession, and conducted himself with firmness and propriety from the time of their setting out till all the coffins were lowered into the grave. But the first spadeful of earth was scarcely thrown in, when the people were startled by his breaking into a long and loud laugh ;—

“ There she’s !—there she’s ! ” he exclaimed ; and, darting through the astonished multitude, he made with all his speed to the gate of the churchyard.

“ Oh ! stop him,—will naebody stop him ? ” cried his distracted wife ; and immediately a number of his friends and acquaintances set off after him, the remainder of the people crowding to the churchyard wall, whence there was an extensive view over the surrounding country. But quickly as those ran who followed him, David Williams kept far ahead of them, terror lending him wings,—till at length, on slackening his pace, William Russel, who was the only one near, gained on him, and endeavoured, by calling in a kind and soothing manner, to prevail on him to return. This only made him increase his speed, and William would have been thrown behind farther than ever, had he not taken a short cut, which brought him very near him.

“ Thank God, he will get him now ! ” cried the people in the churchyard ; when David Williams, turning suddenly to the right, made with the utmost speed towards a rising ground, at the end of which was a freestone quarry of great depth. At this sight a cry of horror arose from the crowd, and most fervently did they pray that he might yet be overtaken ; and great was their joy when they saw that, by the most wonderful exertion, William Russel had got up so near as to stretch out his arm to catch him ; but at that instant his

foot slipped, and ere he could recover himself, the unhappy man, who had now gained the summit, loudly shouting, sprung into the air.

“ God preserve us ! ” cried the people, covering their eyes that they might not see a fellow-creature dashed in pieces ; “ it is all over ! ”

“ Then help me to lift his poor wife,” said Isabel Lawson. “ And now stan’ back, and gie her a’ the air, that she may draw her breath.”

“ She’s drawn her last breath already, I’m doubting,” said Janet Ogilvie, an old skilful woman ; and her fears were found to be too true.

“ An’ what will become o’ the poor orphans ? ” said Isabel.

She had scarcely spoken, when Sir George Beaumont advanced, and, taking one of the children in each hand, he motioned the people to return towards the grave.

“ The puir bairns are provided for now,” whispered one to another, as they followed to witness the completion of the mournful ceremony. It was hastily finished in silence, and Sir George having said a few words to his steward, and committed the orphans to his care, set out on his way to the Hermitage, the assembled multitude all standing uncovered as he passed, to mark their respect for his goodness and humanity.

As might have been expected, the late unhappy occurrences greatly affected Lady Beaumont’s health, and Sir George determined to quit the Hermitage for a time ; and directions were accordingly given to prepare for their immediate removal. While this was doing, the friend who had been with Elie Anderson in the prison happened to call at the Hermitage, and the servants crowded about her, eager to learn what had induced Elie to commit such crimes. When she had repeated what Elie had said, a young woman, one of the servants, exclaimed, “ I know

who's been the cause of this ; for if Bet,"—and she suddenly checked herself.

"That must mean Betsy Pringle," said Robert, who was her sweetheart, and indeed engaged to her ; "so you will please let us hear what you have to say against her, or own that you're a slanderer."

"I have no wish to make mischief," said the servant ; "and as what I said came out without much thought, I would rather say no more; but I'll not be called a slanderer neither."

"Then say what you have to say," cried Robert ; "it's the only way to settle the matter."

"Well, then," said she, "since I must do it, I shall. Soon after I came here, I was one day walking with the bairns and Betsy Pringle, when we met a woman rather oddly dressed, and who had something queer in her manner, and, when she had left us, I asked Betsy who it was. 'Why,' said Betsy, 'I don't know a great deal about her, as she comes from another part of the country ; but if what a friend of mine told me lately is true, this Elie Anderson, as they call her, should have been hanged.'

"Hanged !' cried Miss Charlotte ; 'and why should she be hanged, Betsy ?'

"Never you mind, Miss Charlotte," said Betsy, "I'm speaking to Fanny here."

"You can tell me some other time," said I.

"Nonsense," cried Betsy, "what can a bairn know about it? Weel," continued she, "it was believed that she had made away with John Anderson, her gude-man."

"What's a gudeman, Betsy?" asked Miss Charlotte.

"A husband," answered she.

"And what's making away with him, Betsy ?"

"What need you care?" said Betsy.

"You may just as well tell me," said Miss Charlotte ; "or I'll ask Elie Anderson herself all about it, the first time I meet her."

"That would be a good joke," said Betsy, laughing ; "how Elie Anderson would look to hear a bairn like you speaking about a gudeman, and making away with him ; however," she continued, "that means killing him."

"Killing him!" exclaimed Miss Charlotte. "Oh, the wretch ; and how did she kill him, Betsy ?"

"You must ask no more questions, miss," said Betsy, and the subject dropped.

"Betsy," said I to her afterwards, "you should not have mentioned these things before the children ; do you forget how noticing they are ?"

"Oh, so they are," said Betsy, but only for the moment ; and I'll wager Miss Charlotte has forgotten it all already."

"But, poor thing," Fanny added, "she remembered it but too well."

"I'll not believe this," cried Robert.

"Let Betsy be called, then," said the housekeeper, "and we'll soon get at the truth." Betsy came, was questioned by the housekeeper, and acknowledged the fact.

"Then," said Robert, "you have murdered my master's daughter, and you and I can never be more to one another than we are at this moment ;" and he hastily left the room.

Betsy gazed after him for an instant, and then fell on the floor. She was immediately raised up and conveyed to bed, but recovering soon after, and expressing a wish to sleep, her attendant left her. The unhappy woman, feeling herself unable to face her mistress after what had happened, immediately got up, and, jumping from the window, fled from the Hermitage. The first accounts they had of her were contained in a letter from herself to Lady Beaumont, written on her death-bed.

wherein she described the miserable life she had led since quitting the Hermitage, and entreating her ladyship's forgiveness for the unhappiness which she had occasioned.

"Let what has happened," said Lady Beaumont, "be a warning to those who have the charge of them, to *beware of*

what they say before children ;—a sentiment which Sir George considered as so just and important, that he had it engraven on the stone which covered the little innocents, that their fate and its cause might be had in everlasting remembrance."—"The Odd Volume."

AN ORKNEY WEDDING.

BY JOHN MALCOLM.

To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art.—*Goldsmith*.

GENTLE reader! you, I doubt not, have seen many strange sights, and have passed through a variety of eventful scenes. Perhaps you have visited the Thames Tunnel, and there threaded your way under ground and under water, or you may have witnessed Mr Green's balloon ascent, and seen him take an airing on horseback among the clouds.

Perhaps, too, you have been an observer of human life in all its varieties and extremes : one night figuring away at Almack's with aristocratic beauty, and the next footing it with a band of gipsies in Epping Forest. But, pray tell me, have you ever seen an Orkney Wedding? If not, as I have just received an invitation to one, inclusive of a friend, you shall, if it so please you, accompany me to that scene of rural hospitality.

In conformity with the custom of the country, I have sent off to the young couple a pair of fowls and a leg of mutton, to play their parts upon the festive board; and as every family contributes in like manner, a general pic-nic is formed, which considerably diminishes the expense incident to the occasion; although, as the festivities are frequently

kept up for three or four days by a numerous assemblage of rural beauty and fashion, the young people must contrive to live upon love, if they can, during the first year of their union, having little else left upon which to subsist, except the fragments of the mighty feast.

Well, then, away we go, and about noon approach the scene of festivity,—a country-seat built in the cottage style, thatched with straw, and flanked with a barn and a well-filled corn-yard, enclosed with a turf-dyke.

The wedding company are now seen making their way towards the place of rendezvous; and the young women, arrayed in white robes of emblematic purity, exhibit a most edifying example of economy. With their upper garments carried to a height to which the fashion of short petticoats never reached even at Paris, they trip it away barefooted through the mud, until they reach the banks of a purling stream, about a quarter of a mile distant from the wedding-house. Here their feet, having been previously kissed by the crystal waters, and covered with cotton stockings, which in whiteness would fain vie with the skin they enviously conceal,

are inserted into shoes, in whose mirror of glossy black the enamoured youth obtains a peep of his own charms, while stooping down to adjust their ties into a love-knot.

Immediately in front of the outer-door, or principal entrance of the house, and answering the double purpose of shelter and ornament, stands a broad square pile, composed of the most varied materials, needless to be enumerated, and vulgarly denominated a *mid-denn*, around the base of which some half-dozen of pigs are acting the part of miners, in search of its hidden treasures. It is separated from the house by a sheet of water, tinged with the fairest hues of heaven and earth, viz., blue and green, and over which we pass by a bridge of stepping-stones.

And now, my friend, before entering the house, it may be as well to consider what character you are to personate during the entertainment; for the good people in these islands, like their neighbours of the mainland of Scotland, take that friendly interest in other people's affairs, which the thankless world very unkindly denominates impertinent curiosity.

If I pass you off as a lawyer, you will immediately be overwhelmed with statements of their quarrels and grievances; for they are main fond of law, and will expend the hard-earned savings of years in litigation, although the subject-matter of dispute should happen to be only a goose. You must not, therefore, belong to the bar, since, in the present case, consultations would produce no fees.

I think I shall therefore confer upon you the degree of M.D., which will do as well for the occasion as if you had obtained it by purchase at the University of Aberdeen; although I am not sure that it also may not subject you to some trouble in the way of medical advice.

And now having safely passed over the puddle, and tapped gently at the

door, our arrival is immediately announced by a grand musical chorus, produced by the barking of curs, the cackling of geese, the quacking of ducks, and the grunting and squeaking of pigs. After this preliminary salutation, we are received by the bridegroom, and ushered, with many kind welcomes, into the principal hall, through a half open door, at one end of which we are refreshed with a picture of rural felicity, namely, some sleek-looking cows, *ruminating* in philosophical tranquillity on the subject of diet.

In the middle of the hall is a large blazing turf fire, the smoke of which escapes in part through an aperture in the roof, while the remainder expands in the manner of a pavilion over the heads of the guests.

A door at the other end of the hall opens into the withdrawing-room, the principal furniture of which consists of two large chests filled with oat and barley meal and home-made cheeses, a concealed bed, and a chest of drawers. Both rooms have floors inlaid with earth, and roofs of a dark soot colour, from which drops of a corresponding hue occasionally fall upon the bridal robes of the ladies, with all the fine effect arising from contrast, and ornamental on the principle of the patch upon the cheek of beauty.

Separated from the dwelling-house only by a puddle dotted with stepping-stones stands the barn, which, from its length and breadth, is admirably adapted for the purposes of a ball-room.

Upon entering the withdrawing-room, which the good people with admirable modesty call *the ben*, we take our seats among the elders and chiefs of the people, and drink to the health of the young couple in a glass of delicious Hollands, which, unlike Macbeth's "Amen," does not stick in our throats, although we are well aware that it never paid duty, but was slyly smuggled over sea in a Dutch lugger, and safely stowed,

during some dark night, in the caves of the more remote islands.

The clergyman having now arrived, the company assembled, and the ceremony of marriage being about to take place, the parties to be united walk in, accompanied by the best man and the bride's maid,—those important functionaries, whose business it is to pull off the gloves from the right hands of their constituents, as soon as the order is given to "join hands,"—but this they find to be no easy matter, for at that eventful part of the ceremony their efforts are long baffled, owing to the tightness of the gloves. While they are tugging away to no purpose, the bridegroom looks chagrined, and the bride is covered with blushes; and when at last the operation is accomplished, and perseverance crowned with success, the confusion of the scene seems to have infected the parson, who thus blunders through the ceremony:

"Bridegroom," quoth he, "do you take the woman whom you now hold by the hand, to be your lawful married husband?"

To which interrogation the bridegroom having nodded in the affirmative, the parson perceives his mistake, and calls out, "Wife, I mean." "Wife, I mean," echoes the bridegroom; and the whole company are in a titter.

But, thank heaven, the affair is got over at last; and the bride being well saluted, a large rich cake is broken over her head, the fragments of which are the subject of a scramble among the bystanders, by whom they are picked up as precious relics, having power to produce love-dreams.

And now the married pair, followed by the whole company, set off to church, to be *kirked*, as the phrase is. A performer on the violin (not quite a Rossini) heads the procession, and plays a variety of appropriate airs, until he reaches the church-door. As soon as the party have entered and taken their

seats, the parish-clerk, in a truly impressive and orthodox tone of voice, reads a certain portion of Scripture, wherein wives are enjoined to be obedient to their husbands. The service is concluded with a psalm, and the whole party march back, headed as before by the musician.

Upon returning from church, the company partake of a cold collation, called the *hansel*, which is distributed to each and all by the bride's mother, who for the time obtains the elegant designation of *hansel-wife*. The refreshments consist of cheese, old and new, cut down in large slices, or rather junks, and placed upon oat and barley cakes,—some of the former being about an inch thick, and called *snoddies*.

These delicate viands are washed down with copious libations of new ale, which is handed about in a large wooden vessel, having three handles, and ycleped a *three-lugged cog*.* The ethereal beverage is seasoned with pepper, ginger, and nutmeg, and thickened with eggs and pieces of toasted biscuit.

These preliminaries being concluded, the company return to the barn, where the music strikes up, and the dancing commences with what is called the Bride's Reel; after which, two or three young men take possession of the floor, which they do not resign until they have danced with every woman present; they then give place to others, who pass through the same ordeal, and so on. The dance then becomes more varied and general. Old men and young ones, maids, matrons, and grandmothers, mingle in its mazes. And, oh! what movements are there,—what freaks of the "fantastic toe,"—what goodly figures and glorious gambols in a dance;—compared to which the waltz is but the shadow of joy, and the quadrille the feeble effort of Mirth upon her last legs.

Casting an eye, however, upon the

* Also called *the Bride's cog*.—ED

various performers, I cannot but observe that the old people seem to have monopolised all the airs and graces ; for, while the young maidens slide through the reel in the most quiet and unostentatious way, and then keep bobbing opposite to their partners in all the monotony of the back-step, their more gifted grandmothers figure away in quite another style. With a length of waist which our modern belles do not wish to possess, and an under-figure, which they cannot if they would, even with the aid of pads, but which is nevertheless the true court-shape, rendering the hoop unnecessary, and which is moreover increased by the swinging appendages of huge scarlet pockets, stuffed with bread and cheese, behold them sideling up to their partners in a kind of *echelon* movement, spreading out their petticoats like sails, and then, as if seized with a sudden fit of bashfulness, making a hasty retreat rearwards. Back they go at a round trot ; and seldom do they stop until their career of retiring modesty ends in a somersault over the sitters along the sides of the room.

The old men, in like manner, possess similar advantages over the young ones ; the latter being sadly inferior to their seniors in address and attitudes. Nor is this much to be wondered at, the young gentlemen having passed most of their summer vacations at Davis' Straits, where their society consisted chiefly of bears ; whereas the old ones are men of the world, having in early life entered the Company's service (I do not mean that of the East Indies, but of Hudson's Bay), where their manners must no doubt have been highly polished by their intercourse with the Squaws, and all the beauty and fashion of that interesting country.

Such of them as have sojourned there are called north-westers, and are distinguished by that modest assurance, and perfect ease and self-possession,

(9)

only to be acquired by mixing frequently and freely with the best society. Indeed, one would suppose that their manners were formed upon the model of the old French school ; and *queues* are in general use among them—not, however, those of the small pigtail kind, but ones which in shape and size strongly resemble the Boulogne sausage.

And now, amidst these ancients, I recognise my old and very worthy friend, Mr James Houston, kirk-officer and sexton of the parish, of whom a few words, perhaps, may not be unacceptable.

His degree of longitude may be about five feet from the earth, and in latitude he may extend at an average to about three. His countenance, which is swarthy, and fully as broad as it is long, although not altogether the model which an Italian painter would select for his Apollo, would yet be considered handsome among the Esquimaux ; or, as James calls them, the *Huskinese*. His hair, which (notwithstanding an age at which Time generally saves us the expense of the powder-tax) is jet black, is of a length and strength that would not shrink from comparison with that of a horse's tail, and hangs down over his broad shoulders in a fine and generous flow. The coat which he wears upon this, as upon all other occasions, is cut upon the model of the spencer ; its colour, a "heavenly blue," varied by numerous dark spots, like clouds in a summer sky ; while his nether bulk is embraced by a pair of tight buckskin "unmentionables."

Extending from the bosom down to the knee he wears a leather apron. This part of his dress is never dispensed with, except at church ; and though I have not been able to ascertain its precise purpose with perfect certainty, I am inclined to think it is used as a perpetual pinafore, to preserve his garments from the pollution of soup and grease-drops at table.

The principal materials of his dress are, moreover, prepared for use by his own hands : Mr Houston being at once sole proprietor and operative of a small manufactory, consisting of a single loom ; when not employed at which, or in spreading the couch of rest in the churchyard, he enjoys a kind of perpetual *otium cum dignitate*.

His chief moveables, in addition to the loom, consist of three Shetland ponies and a small Orkney plough, by the united aid of which he is enabled to scratch up the surface of a small estate, which supplies him with grain sufficient for home consumption, but not for exportation.

His peculiar and more shining accomplishments consist in the art of mimicking the dance of every man and woman in the parish, which he does with a curious felicity, and in executing short pieces of music on that sweetest of lyres, the Jew's harp.

Like most of his profession, he is a humorist ; and though he has long “walked hand-in-hand with death,” nobody enjoys life with a keener relish at the festive board or the midnight ball, which he finds delightful relaxations from his *grave* occupations during the day ; and yet even these latter afford him a rare and consolatory joy denied to other men,—I mean that of meeting with his old friends, after they have been long dead, and of welcoming, with a grin of recognition, the skulls of his early associates, as he playfully pats them with his spade, and tosses them into the light of day.

But it is in his capacity of kirk-officer that Mr Houston appears to the greatest advantage, while ushering the clergyman to the pulpit, and marching before him with an air truly magnificent, and an erectness of carriage somewhat beyond the perpendicular, he performs his important function of opening and shutting the door of the pulpit, and takes his seat under an almost over-

whelming sense of dignity, being for the time a kind of lord high constable, with whom is entrusted the execution of the law. And that he does not bear the sword in vain is known to their cost, by all the litigious and church-going dogs of the parish ; for no sooner do they begin to growl and tear each other, with loud yells, which they generally do, so as to chime in with the first notes of the first psalm, than starting up with a long staff,—the awe-inspiring baton of office,—he belabours the yelping curs with such blessed effect as to restore them to a sense of propriety, and prevent them from mingling their unhallowed chorus with that of the melodious choir.

Having given this brief outline of Mr Houston, we shall proceed through the remaining part of the scene. A large and very substantial dinner forms an agreeable variety in the entertainments of the day ; and in the evening the scene of elegant conviviality is transferred to the ball-room, where dancing again commences with renovated spirit. The perpetual motion, also, seems at last to be discovered in that of the *three-legged cog*, which circulates unceasing as the sun ;—like that, diffusing life and gladness in its growing orbit round the room, and kissed in its course by so many fair lips, bears off upon its edges much of their balmy dew, affording a double-refined relish to its inspiring draughts.

At length the supper is announced, and a rich repast it is : quarters of mutton, boiled and roasted, flocks of fat hens, in marshalled ranks, flanked with roasted geese, luxuriously swimming in a savoury sea of butter, form the *élite* of the feast ; from which all manner of vegetables are entirely excluded, being considered as much too humble for such an occasion.

The company do ample justice to the hospitality of their entertainers ; and even the bride, considering the delicacy of her situation, has already exceeded

all bounds of moderation. This, however, is entirely owing to her high sense of politeness ; for she conceives that it would be rude in her to decline eating so long as she is asked to do so by the various carvers. But now I really begin to be alarmed for her : already has she dispatched six or seven services of animal food, and is even now essaying to disjoint the leg and wing of a goose ; but, thank Heaven !—in attempting to cut through the bone, she has upset her plate, and transferred its contents into her lap ; which circumstance, I trust, she will consider a providential warning to eat no more.

And now, before leaving the wedding, we will have a little conversation with some of my country friends, who are fond of chatting with those whom they call *the gentry* ; and who, being particularly partial to a pompous phraseology, and addicted to the use of words, of which they either do not understand the meaning at all, or very imperfectly, are all of the Malaprop school, and often quite untranslatable. A fair specimen of their style may be had from my friend Magnus Isbister, who has taken his seat upon my left hand, but at such a distance from the table that his victuals are continually dropping betwixt his plate and his mouth. I will speak to him.

"I am glad to see you here, Magnus ; and looking so well, that I need not inquire after your health."

Magnus. "Why, thanks to the Best, sir, I'm brave and easy that way ; but sairly hadden down wi' the laird, wha's threatenin' to raise my rent that's ower high already ; but he was aye a *rax-ward* man,—and, between you and me, he's rather greedy."

"That's a hard case, Magnus ; you should speak to the factor, and explain your circumstances to him."

Mag. "Oh, sir, I hae been doin' that already ; but he got into a *sevandable* passion, an' said something about

'his eye and Betty Martin ;'—I'm sure I ken naething about her ; but ye maun ken he's a *felonious* arguer, an' ower deep for the like o' us puir *infidel bodies*."

"Had you not better sit nearer to the table, Magnus ? You are losing your victuals by keeping at such a distance."

Mag. "Na, na, sir ; I doubt ye're mockan' me noo ; but I ken what gude manners is better than do ony siccana thing."

"Where is your son at present ?"

Mag. "Why, thanks be praised, sir, he's doing bravely. He follows the *swindling* trade awa in the south, whaur they tell me the great Bishops o' Lunnon are proclaiming war wi' the Papists."

"That they are, Magnus, and ever will do."

Mag. "Can ye tell me, sir, if it's true that the king's intending to part wi' his ministers ? I'm thinking it would be a' the better for the like o' us boons folk, and wad free us frae the tithes."

"You misunderstand the thing, Magnus ; the king's ministers are not those of the Church, but of the State."

Mag. "Oh — is that it ? Weel, I never kent that before. But can ye tell me, sir, wha that gentleman is upon your ither side ?"

"He is a young Englishman, who has come north to see this country."

Mag. "Is he indeed, sir ? And, by your leave, what *ack o' parliament* does he drive ?"

"He is, I believe, a doctor of medicine."

Mag. "Just so, sir ; I wonder if he could tell what would be good for me ?"

"I thought you told me you were in good health ?"

Mag. "Weel, as I said before, I'm brave and easy that way, indeed ; but yet I'm whiles fashed wi' the *rheumaticisms*, and sometimes I'm very *domalis*."

"Domalis!—what's that, Magnus?"

Mag. "Weel, never might there be the waur o' that; I thought you, that's been at college, wad hae kent that;—domalis is just '*flamp*' (listless)."

"I would advise you to keep clear of the doctors, Magnus; believe me, you don't require them at present;—but come, favour me with a toast."

Mag. (*Filling his glass.*) "Weel,

sir, I'se do my best to gie ye a gude ane (*scratching his head*);—weel, sir, 'Here's luck.'"

"An excellent toast, Magnus, which I drink with all my heart; and, in return 'Here's to your health and happiness, and that of the bride and bridegroom, and the rest of this pleasant company, and a good night to you all.'"

THE GHOST WITH THE GOLDEN CASKET.

BY ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

Is my soul tamed
And baby-rid with the thought that flood or field
Can render back, to scare men and the moon,
The airy shapes of the corsest they enwomb?
And what if 'tis so—shall I lose the crown
Of my most golden hope, 'cause its fair circle
Is haunted by a shadow?

FROM the coast of Cumberland the beautiful old castle of Caerlaverock is seen standing on the point of a fine green promontory, bounded by the river Nith on one side, by the deep sea on another, by the almost impassable morass of Solway on a third; while, far beyond, you observe the three spires of Dumfries, and the high green hills of Dalswinton and Keir. It was formerly the residence of the almost princely names of Douglas, Seaton, Kirkpatrick, and Maxwell: it is now the dwelling-place of the hawk and the owl; its courts are a lair for cattle, and its walls afford a midnight shelter to the passing smuggler, or, like those of the city doomed in Scripture, are places for the fishermen to dry their nets. Between this fine old ruin and the banks of the Nith, at the foot of a grove of pines, and within a stone-cast

of tide-mark, the remains of a rude cottage are yet visible to the curious eye; the bramble and the wild plum have in vain tried to triumph over the huge gray granite blocks, which composed the foundations of its walls. The vestiges of a small garden may still be traced, more particularly in summer, when roses and lilies, and other relics of its former beauty, begin to open their bloom, clinging, amid the neglect and desolation of the place, with something like human affection, to the soil. This rustic ruin presents no attractions to the eye of the profound antiquary, compared to those of its more stately companion, Caerlaverock Castle; but with this rude cottage and its garden, tradition connects a tale so wild and so moving, as to elevate it, in the contemplation of the peasantry, above all the princely feasts and feudal atrocities of its neighbour.

It is now some fifty years since I visited the parish of Caerlaverock ; but the memory of its people, its scenery, and the story of the Ghost with the Golden Casket, are as fresh with me as matters of yesterday. I had walked out to the river bank one sweet afternoon of July, when the fishermen were hastening to dip their nets in the coming tide, and the broad waters of the Solway sea were swelling and leaping against bank and cliff, as far as the eye could reach. It was studded over with boats, and its more unfrequented bays were white with water-fowl. I sat down on a small grassy mound between the cottage ruins and the old garden plot, and gazed, with all the hitherto untasted pleasure of a stranger, on the beautiful scene before me. On the right, and beyond the river, the mouldering relics of the ancient religion of Scotland ascended, in unassimilating beauty, above the humble kirk of New Abbey and its squalid village ; farther to the south rose the white sharp cliffs of Barnhourie ; while on the left stood the ancient Keeps of Cumlongan and Torthorald, and the Castle of Caerlaverock. Over the whole looked the stately green mountain of Criffel, confronting its more stately but less beautiful neighbour, Skiddaw ; while between them flowed the deep wide sea of Solway, hemmed with cliff, and castle, and town.

As I sat looking on the increasing multitudes of waters, and watching the success of the fishermen, I became aware of the approach of an old man, leading, as one will conduct a dog in a string, a fine young milch cow, in a halter of twisted hair, which, passing through the ends of two pieces of flat wood, fitted to the animal's cheek-bones, pressed her nose, and gave her great pain whenever she became disobedient. The cow seemed willing to enjoy the luxury of a browse on the rich pasture which surrounded the little ruined cottage ; but in this

humble wish she was not to be indulged ; for the aged owner, coiling up the tether, and seizing her closely by the head, conducted her past the tempting herbage towards a small and close-cropt hillock, a good stone-cast distant. In this piece of self-denial the animal seemed reluctant to sympathise—she snuffed the fresh green pasture, and plunged, and started, and nearly broke away. What the old man's strength seemed nearly unequal to was accomplished by speech :—

“ Bonnie leddy, bonnie leddy,” said he, in a soothing tone, “ it canna be, it maunna be ; hinnie ! hinnie ! what would become of my three-bonnie grandbairns, made fatherless and mitherless by that false flood afore us, if they supped milk, and tasted butter, that came from the greensward of thisdoomed and unblessed spot ? ”

The animal appeared to comprehend something in her own way from the speech of her owner : she abated her resistance ; and, indulging only in a passing glance at the rich deep herbage, passed on to her destined pasture.

I had often heard of the singular superstitions of the Scottish peasantry, and that every hillock had its song, every hill its ballad, and every valley its tale. I followed with my eye the old man and his cow : he went but a little way, till, seating himself on the ground, retaining still the tether in his hand, he said,—

“ Now, bonnie leddy, feast thy fill on this good greensward ; it is halesome and holy, compared to the sward at the doomed cottage of auld Gibbie Gyrape—leave that to smugglers' nags : Willie o' Brandyburn and roaring Jock o' Kempstane will ca' the Haunted Ha' a hained bit—they are godless fearnoughts.”

I looked at the person of the peasant. He was a stout hale old man, with a weather-beaten face, furrowed something by time, and perhaps by sorrow. Though summer was at its warmest, he

wore a broad chequered mantle, fastened at the bosom with a skewer of steel ; a broad bonnet, from beneath the circumference of which straggled a few thin locks, as white as driven snow, shining like amber, and softer than the finest flax ; while his legs were warmly cased in blue-ribbed boot-hose. Having laid his charge to the grass, he looked leisurely around him, and espying me,—a stranger, and dressed above the manner of the peasantry,—he acknowledged my presence by touching his bonnet ; and, as if willing to communicate something of importance, he struck the tethered stake in the ground and came to the old garden fence.

Wishing to know the peasant's reason for avoiding the ruins, I thus addressed him :

"This is a pretty spot, my aged friend, and the herbage looks so fresh and abundant, that I would advise thee to bring thy charge hither ; and while she continues to browse, I would gladly listen to the history of thy white locks, for they seem to have been bleached in many tempests."

"Ay, ay," said the peasant, shaking his white head with a grave smile; "they have braved sundry tempests between sixteen and sixty ; but touching this pasture, sir, I know of none who would like their cows to crop it : the aged cattle shun the place ;—the bushes bloom, but bear no fruit,—the birds never build in the branches,—the children never come near to play,—and the aged never choose it for a resting-place ; but, pointing it out as they pass to the young, tell them the story of its desolation. Sae ye see, sir, having nae gude-will to such a spot of earth myself, I like little to see a stranger sitting in such an unblessed place ; and I would as good as advise ye to come ower wi' me to the cowslip knoll—there are reasons mony that an honest man shouldna sit there."

I arose at once, and seating myself beside the peasant on the cowslip knoll,

desired to know something of the history of the spot from which he had just warned me. The old man looked on me with an air of embarrassment.

"I am just thinking," said he, "that, as ye are an Englishman, I shouldna acquaint ye wi' such a story. Ye'll mak it, I'm doubting, a matter of reproach and vaunt when ye gae hame, how Willie Borlan o' Caerlaverock told ye a tale of Scottish iniquity, that cowed a' the stories in southern book or history."

This unexpected obstacle was soon removed.

"My sage and considerate friend," I said, "I have the blood in my bosom that will keep me from revealing such a tale to the scoffer and the scorner. I am something of a Caerlaverock man—the grandson of Marion Stobie of Dookdub."

The peasant seized my hand—“Marion Stobie ! bonnie Marion Stobie o' Dookdub—whom I wooed sae sair, and loved sae lang !—Man, I love ye for her sake ; and well was it for her braw English bridegroom that William Borlan—frail and faded now, but strong and in manhood then—was a thousand miles from Caerlaverock, rolling on the salt sea, when she was bridled. Ye have the glance of her ee, —I could ken it yet amang ten thousand, gray as my head is. I will tell the grandson of bonnie Marion Stobie ony tale he likes to ask for ; and the story of the Ghost and the Gowd Casket shall be foremost."

"You may imagine then," said the old Caerlaverock peasant, rising at once with the commencement of his story from his native dialect into very passable English—"you may imagine these ruined walls raised again in their beauty,—whitened, and covered with a coating of green broom ; that garden, now desolate, filled with herbs in their season, and with flowers, hemmed round with a fence of cherry and plum-

trees ; and the whole possessed by a young fisherman, who won a fair subsistence for his wife and children from the waters of the Solway sea : you may imagine it, too, as far from the present time as fifty years. There are only two persons living now, who remember when the Bonne Homme Richard—the first ship ever Richard Faulder commanded—was wrecked on the Pelock sands: one of these persons now addresses you, the other is the fisherman who once owned that cottage,—whose name ought never to be named, and whose life seems lengthened as a warning to the earth, how fierce God's judgments are. Life changes—all breathing things have their time and their season ; but the Solway flows in the same beauty—Criffel rises in the same majesty—the light of morning comes, and the full moon arises now, as they did then ;—but this moralizing matters little. It was about the middle of harvest—I remember the day well ; it had been sultry and suffocating, accompanied by rushings of wind, sudden convulsions of the water, and cloudings of the sun :—I heard my father sigh and say, ‘Dool, dool to them found on the deep sea to-night ; there will happen strong storm and fearful tempest !’

“The day closed, and the moon came over Skiddaw : all was perfectly clear and still ; frequent dashings and whirling agitations of the sea were soon heard mingling with the hasty clang of the water-fowls' wings, as they forsook the waves, and sought shelter among the hollows of the rocks. The storm was nigh. The sky darkened down at once ; clap after clap of thunder followed ; and lightning flashed so vividly, and so frequent, that the wide and agitated expanse of Solway was visible from side to side—from St Bees to Barnhourie. A very heavy rain, mingled with hail, succeeded ; and a wind accompanied it, so fierce, and so high, that the white foam of the sea was showered as thick

as snow on the summit of Caerlaverock Castle.

“Through this perilous sea, and amid this darkness and tempest, a bark was observed coming swiftly down the middle of the sea ; her sails rent, and her decks crowded with people. The ‘carry,’ as it is called, of the tempest was direct from St Bees to Caerlaverock ; and experienced men could see that the bark would be driven full on the fatal shoals of the Scottish side ; but the lightning was so fierce that few dared venture to look on the approaching vessel, or take measures for endeavouring to preserve the lives of the unfortunate mariners. My father stood on the threshold of his door, and beheld all that passed in the bosom of the sea. The bark approached fast, her canvas rent to shreds, her masts nearly levelled with the deck, and the sea foaming over her so deep, and so strong, as to threaten to sweep the remains of her crew from the little refuge the broken masts and splintered beams still afforded them. She now seemed within half a mile of the shore, when a strong flash of lightning, that appeared to hang over the bark for a moment, showed the figure of a lady richly dressed, clinging to a youth who was pressing her to his bosom.

“My father exclaimed, ‘Saddle me my black horse, and saddle me my gray, and bring them down to the Dead-man's bank,’—and, swift in action as he was in resolve, he hastened to the shore, his servants following with his horses. The shore of Solway presented then, as it does now, the same varying line of coast ; and the house of my father stood in the bosom of a little bay, nearly a mile distant from where we sit. The remains of an old forest interposed between the bay at Dead-man's bank, and the bay at our feet ; and mariners had learned to wish, that if it were their doom to be wrecked, it might be in the bay of douce William Borlan, rather than that of Gilbert Gyrape, the pro-

priotor of that ruined cottage. But human wishes are vanities, wished either by sea or land. I have heard my father say, he could never forget the cries of the mariners, as the bark smote on the Pellock bank, and the flood rushed through the chasms made by the concussion ; but he could far less forget the agony of a lady—the loveliest that could be looked upon, and the calm and affectionate courage of the young man who supported her, and endeavoured to save her from destruction. Richard Faulder, the only man who survived, has often sat at my fireside, and sung me a very rude, but a very moving ballad, which he made on this young and unhappy pair ; and the old mariner assured me he had only added rhymes, and a descriptive line or two, to the language in which Sir William Musgrave endeavoured to soothe and support his wife."

It seemed a thing truly singular, that at this very moment two young fishermen, who sat on the margin of the sea below us, watching their halve-nets, should sing, and with much sweetness, the very song the old man had described. They warbled verse and verse alternately ; and rock and bay seemed to retain and then release the sound. Nothing is so sweet as a song by the seaside on a tranquil evening.

SIR WILLIAM MUSGRAVE.

First Fisherman.

"O lady, lady, why do you weep ?
Tho' the wind be loosed on the raging deep,
Tho' the heaven be mirker than mirk may be,
And our frail bark ships a fearful sea,
Yet thou art safe—as on that sweet night
When our bridal candles gleamed far and
bright."—

There came a shriek, and there came a sound,
And the Solway roared, and the ship spun
round.

Second Fisherman.

"O lady, lady, why do you cry ?
Though the waves be flashing top-mast high,
Though our frail bark yields to the dashing
brine,
And heaven and earth show no saving sign,

There is One who comes in the time of need,
And curbs the waves as we curb a steed."—
The lightning came, with the whirlwind blast,
And cleaved the prow, and smote down the
mast.

First Fisherman.

"O lady, lady, weep not nor wail,
Though the sea runs howe as Dalswinton vale,
Then flashes high as Barnhourie brave,
And yawns for thee, like the yearning grave—
Tho' twixt thee and the ravening flood
There is but my arm and this splintering wood,
The fell quicksand, or the famished brine,
Can ne'er harm a face so fair as thine."

Both.

"O lady, lady, be bold and brave,
Spread thy white breast to the fearful wave,
And cling to me with that white right hand,
And I'll set thee safe on the good dry land."—
A lightning flash on the shallop strook,
The Solway roared, and Caerlaverock shook ;
From the sinking ship there were shriekings
cast,
That were heard above the tempest's blast.

The young fishermen having concluded their song, my companion proceeded.

"The lightning still flashed vivid and fast, and the storm raged with unabated fury ; for, between the ship and the shore, the sea broke in frightful undulation, and leaped on the greensward several fathoms deep abreast. My father, mounted on one horse, and holding another in his hand, stood prepared to give all the aid that a brave man could to the unhappy mariners ; but neither horse nor man could endure the onset of that tremendous surge. The bark bore for a time the fury of the element ; but a strong eastern wind came suddenly upon her, and crushing her between the wave and the freestone bank, drove her from the entrance of my father's little bay towards the dwelling of Gibbie Gyrape, and the thick forest intervening, she was out of sight in a moment. My father saw, for the last time, the lady and her husband looking shoreward from the side of the vessel, as she drifted along ; and as he galloped round the head of the forest, he heard for the last time the outcry of

some, and the wail and intercession of others. When he came before the fisherman's house, a fearful sight presented itself : the ship, dashed to atoms, covered the shore with its wreck, and with the bodies of the mariners—not a living soul escaped, save Richard Faulder, whom the fiend who guides the spectre shallop of the Solway had rendered proof to the perils of the deep. The fisherman himself came suddenly from his cottage, all dripping and drenched, and my father addressed him :—

“ ‘ O, Gilbert, Gilbert, what a fearful sight is this ! Has Heaven blessed thee with making thee the means of saving a human soul ? ’

“ ‘ Nor soul nor body have I saved,’ said the fisherman, doggedly. ‘ I have done my best ; the storm proved too stark, and the lightning too fierce for me ; their boat alone came near with a lady and a casket of gold, but she was swallowed up with the surge.’

“ My father confessed afterwards that he was struck with the tone in which these words were delivered, and made answer—

“ ‘ If thou hast done thy best to save souls to-night, a bright reward will be thine ;—if thou hast been fonder for gain than for working the mariners’ redemption, thou hast much to answer for.’

“ As he uttered these words, an immense wave rolled landward, as far as the place where they stood ; it almost left its foam on their faces, and suddenly receding, deposited at their feet the dead body of the lady. As my father lifted her in his arms, he observed that the jewels which had adorned her hair—at that time worn long—had been forcibly rent away ; the diamonds and gold that enclosed her neck, and ornamented the bosom of her rich satin dress, had been torn off,—the rings removed from her fingers,—and on her neck, lately so lily-white and pure, there appeared the

marks of hands—not laid there in love and gentleness, but with a fierce and deadly grasp.

“ The lady was buried with the body of her husband, side by side, in Caerlaverock burial-ground. My father never openly accused Gilbert the fisherman of having murdered the lady for her riches, as she reached the shore, preserved from sinking, as was supposed, by her long, wide, and stiff satin robes ;—but from that hour till the hour of his death, my father never broke bread with him—never shook him or his by the hand, nor spoke with them in wrath or in love. The fisherman from that time, too, waxed rich and prosperous ; and from being the needy proprietor of a halve-net, and the tenant at will of a rude cottage, he became, by purchase, lord of a handsome inheritance, proceeded to build a bonny mansion, and called it Gyraphe-ha ; and became a leading man in a flock of a purer kind of Presbyterians, and a precept and example to the community.

“ But though the portioner of Gyraphe-ha’ prospered wondrously, his claims to parochial distinction, and the continuance of his fortune, were treated with scorn by many, and with doubt by all ; though nothing open or direct was said, yet looks, more cutting at times than the keenest speech, and actions still more expressive, showed that the hearts of honest men were alienated—the cause was left to his own interpretation. The peasant scrupled to become his servant ; sailors hesitated to receive his grain on board, lest perils should find them on the deep ; the beggar ceased to solicit alms ; the drover and horse-couper—an unscrupulous generation—found out a more distant mode of concluding bargains than by shaking his hand ; his daughters, handsome and blue-eyed, were neither wooed nor married ; no maiden would hold tryst with his sons, though maidens were then as little loth as they are now ; and the

aged peasant, as he passed his new mansion, would shake his head and say—‘The voice of spilt blood will be lifted up against thee ; and a spirit shall come up from the waters, and cause the corner-stone of thy habitation to tremble and quake.’

It happened, during the summer which succeeded this unfortunate shipwreck, that I accompanied my father to the Solway, to examine his nets. It was near midnight, the tide was making, and I sat down by his side and watched the coming of the waters. The shore was glittering in starlight as far as the eye could reach. Gilbert, the fisherman, had that morning removed from his cottage to his new mansion ; the former was therefore untenanted, and the latter, from its vantage-ground on the crest of the hill, threw down to us the sound of mirth, and music, and dancing, —a revelry common in Scotland on taking possession of a new house. As we lay quietly looking on the swelling sea, and observing the water-fowl swimming and ducking in the increasing waters, the sound of the merriment became more audible. My father listened to the mirth, looked to the sea, looked to the deserted cottage, and then to the new mansion, and said—

“ ‘My son, I have a counsel to give thee ; treasure it in thy heart, and practise it in thy life : the daughters of him of Gyraphe-ha’ are fair, and have an eye that would wile away the wits of the wisest. Their father has wealth,—I say nought of the way he came by it,—they will have golden portions doubtless. But I would rather lay thy head aneath the gowans in Caerlaverock kirkyard (and son have I none beside thee), than see thee lay it on the bridal pillow with the begotten of that man, though she had Nithsdale for her dowry. Let not my words be as seed sown on the ocean. I may not now tell thee why this warning is given. Before that fatal shipwreck, I would have said Prudence

Gyraphe, in her kirtle, was a better bride than some who have golden dowers. I have long thought some one would see a sight ; and often, while holding my halve-net in the midnight tide, have I looked for something to appear, for where blood is shed there doth the spirit haunt for a time, and give warning to man. May I be strengthened to endure the sight ! ’

“ I answered not, being accustomed to regard my father’s counsel as a matter not to be debated, as a solemn command : we heard something like the rustling of wings on the water, accompanied by a slight curling motion of the tide. ‘ God haud His right hand about us ! ’ said my father, breathing thick with emotion and awe, and looking on the sea with a gaze so intense that his eyes seemed to dilate, and the hair of his forehead to project forward, and bristle into life. I looked, but observed nothing, save a long line of thin and quivering light, dancing along the surface of the sea : it ascended the bank, on which it seemed to linger for a moment, and then entering the fisherman’s cottage, made roof and rafter gleam with a sudden illumination. ‘ I’ll tell thee what, Gibbie Gyraphe,’ said my father, ‘ I wouldna be the owner of thy heart, and the proprietor of thy right hand, for all the treasures in earth and ocean.’ ”

“ A loud and piercing scream from the cottage made us thrill with fear, and in a moment the figures of three human beings rushed into the open air, and ran towards us with a swiftness which supernatural dread alone could inspire. We instantly knew them to be three noted smugglers who infested the country ; and rallying when they found my father maintain his ground, they thus mingled their fears and the secrets of their trade, for terror fairly overpowered their habitual caution.

“ ‘ I vow by the night tide, and the crooked timber,’ said Willie Weethause,

'I never beheld sic a light as yon since our distillation pipe took fire, and made a burnt instead of a drink offering of our spirits ; I'll uphold it comes for nae good—a warning maybe—sae ye may gang on, Wattie Bouseaway, wi' yer wickedness ; as for me, I'se gang hame and repent.'

"Saulless bodie !" said his companion, whose natural hardihood was considerably supported by his communion with the brandy cup—"saulless bodie, for a flaff o' fire and a maiden's shadow, would ye foreswear the gallant trade ? Saul to gude ! but auld Miller Morison shall turn yer thrapple into a drain-pipe to wyse the waste water from his mill, if ye turn back now, and help us nae through wi' as strong an importation as ever cheered the throat, and cheeped in the crapin. Confound the fuzhionless bodie ! he glowers as if this fine starlight were something frae the warst side o' the world, and thae staring een o' his are busy shaping heaven's sweetest and balmiest air into the figures of wraiths and goblins.'

"Robert Telfer," said my father, addressing the third smuggler, "tell me naught of the secrets of your perilous trade ; but tell me what you have seen, and why ye uttered that fearful scream, that made the wood-doves start from Caerlaverock pines."

"I'll tell ye what, goodman," said the mariner, "I have seen the fires of heaven running as thick along the sky, and on the surface of the ocean, as ye ever saw the blaze on a bowl o' punch at a merry-making, and neither quaked nor screamed ; but ye'll mind the light that came to that cottage to-night was one for some fearful purport, which let the wise expound ; sae it lessened nae one's courage to quail for sic an apparition ? 'Od, if I thought living soul would ever make the start I gied an upcast to me, I'd drill his breast-bane with my dirk like a turnip-lantern."

"My father mollified the wrath of this maritime desperado, by assuring him that he beheld the light go from the sea to the cottage, and that he shook with terror, for it seemed no common light.

"Ou, then," said hopeful Robin, "since it was ane o' our ain cannie sea apparitions, I care less about it. I took it for some landward sprite ! And now I think on't, where were my een ? Did it no stand amang its ain light, with its long hanks of hair dripping and drenched ; with a casket of gold in ae hand, and the other guarding its throat ? I'll be bound it's the ghost o' some sonsie lass that has had her neck nipped for her gold ; and had she stayed till I emptied the bicker o' brandy, I would have asked a cannie question or twa."

"Willie Weethause had now fairly overcome his consternation, and began to feel all his love return for the 'gallant trade,' as his comrade called it.

"The tide serves, lads ! the tide serves ; let us slip our drap o' brandy into the bit bonnie boat, and tottle awa amang the sweet starlight as far as the Kingholm or the town quarry—ye ken we have to meet Bailie Gardevine and Laird Soukaway o' Ladlemouth."

"They then returned, not without hesitation and fear, to the old cottage ; carried their brandy to the boat ; and as my father and I went home, we heard the dipping of their oars in the Nith, along the banks of which they sold their liquor, and told their tale of fear, magnifying its horror at every step, and introducing abundance of variations.

"The story of the Ghost with the Golden Casket flew over the country side with all its variations, and with many comments. Some said they saw her, and some thought they saw her ; and those who had the hardihood to keep watch on the beach at midnight had their tales to tell of terrible lights and strange visions. With one who

delighted in the marvellous, the spectre was decked in attributes that made the circle of auditors tighten round the hearth ; while others, who allowed to a ghost only a certain quantity of thin air to clothe itself in, reduced it in their description to a very unpoetic shadow, or a kind of better sort of will-o'-the-wisp, that could for its own amusement counterfeit the humanness. There were many others who, like my father, beheld the singular illumination appear at midnight on the coast ; saw also something sailing along with it in the form of a lady in bright garments, her hair long and wet, and shining in diamonds ; and heard a struggle, and the shriek as of a creature drowning.

"The belief of the peasantry did not long confine the apparition to the sea coast ; it was seen sometimes late at night far inland, and following Gilbert the fisherman, like a human shadow—like a pure light—like a white garment—and often in the shape and with the attributes in which it disturbed the carousal of the smugglers. I heard douce Davie Haining—a God-fearing man, and an elder of the Burgher congregation, and on whose word I could well lippen, when drink was kept from his head—I heard him say that as he rode home late from the Roodfair of Dumfries—the night was dark, there lay a dusting of snow on the ground, and no one appeared on the road but himself ; he was lilting and singing the canny end of the auld sang, 'There's a cutty stool in our kirk,' which was made on some foolish quean's misfortune, when he heard the sound of horses' feet behind him at full gallop, and ere he could look round, who should flee past, urging his horse with whip and spur, but Gilbert the fisherman ! 'Little wonder that he galloped,' said the elder, 'for a fearful form hovered around him, making many a clutch at him, and with every clutch uttering a shriek most piercing to hear.

But why should I make a long story of a common tale ? The curse of spilt blood fell on him, and on his children, and on all he possessed ; his sons and daughters died ; his flocks perished ; his grain grew, but never filled the ear ; and fire came from heaven, or rose from hell, and consumed his house and all that was therein. He is now a man of ninety years ; a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, without a house to put his white head in, and with the unexpiated curse still clinging to him."

While my companion was making this summary of human wretchedness, I observed the figure of a man, stooping to the earth with extreme age, gliding through among the bushes of the ruined cottage, and approaching the advancing tide. He wore a loose great-coat, patched to the ground, and fastened round his waist by a belt and buckle ; the remains of stockings and shoes were on his feet ; a kind of fisherman's cap surmounted some remaining white hairs, while a long peeled stick supported him as he went. My companion gave an involuntary shudder when he saw him—

"Lo and behold, now, here comes Gilbert the fisherman ! Once every twenty-four hours does he come, let the wind and the rain be as they will, to the nightly tide, to work o'er again, in imagination, his old tragedy of unrighteousness. See how he waves his hand, as if he welcomed some one from the sea ; he raises his voice, too, as if something in the water required his counsel ; and see how he dashes up to the middle, and grapples with the water as if he clutched a human being !"

I looked on the old man, and heard him call in a hollow and broken voice—

"Ahoy ! the ship ahoy,—turn your boat's head ashore ! And, my bonnie leddy, keep haud o' yer casket. Hech be't ! that wave would have sunk a three-decker, let a be a slender boat.

See--see an she binna sailing abune the water like a wild swan!"—and wading deeper in the tide as he spoke, he seemed to clutch at something with both hands, and struggle with it in the water.

"Na, na—dinna haud your white hands to me; ye wear ower mickle gowd in your hair, and ower mony diamonds on your bosom, to 'scape drowning. There's as mickle gowd in this casket as would have sunk thee seventy fathom deep." And he continued to hold his hands under the water, muttering all the while.

"She's half gane now; and I'll be a braw laird, and build a bonnie house, and gang crouesly to kirk and market.

Now I may let the waves work their will; my wark will be ta'en for theirs."

He turned to wade to the shore, but a large and heavy wave came full dash on him, and bore him off his feet, and ere any assistance reached him, all human aid was too late; for nature was so exhausted with the fulness of years, and with his exertions, that a spoonful of water would have drowned him. The body of this miserable old man was interred, after some opposition from the peasantry, beneath the wall of the kirkyard; and from that time the Ghost with the Golden Casket was seen no more, and only continued to haunt the evening tale of the hind and the farmer.

RANALD OF THE HENS:

A TRADITION OF THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS.

EARLY in the sixteenth century, Macdonald of Clanranald married the daughter of Fraser Lord Lovat, and from this connection some very unfortunate consequences to both these powerful families followed. Soon after his marriage Clanranald died, and left but one lawful son, who was bred and educated at Castle Donie, the seat of Lovat, under the care of his maternal grandfather. The name of the young chieftain was Ranald, and, unhappily for himself, he was distinguished by the appellation *Gaulta*, or Lowland, because Lovat's country was considered as approaching towards the manners, customs, and appearance of the Lowlands, compared to his own native land of Moidart, one of the most barren and mountainous districts in the Highlands.

Ranald was an accomplished youth,

and promised to be an ornament to his family and his country; his disposition was amiable, and his personal appearance extremely handsome and prepossessing. While yet a stripling, he visited his estate; and his people being desirous to give him the best reception in their power, he found at every house great entertainments provided, and much expense incurred by the slaughter of cattle and other acts of extravagance, which appeared to Ranald very superfluous. He was a stranger to the customs of the country, and it would seem that he had no friendly or judicious counsellor. In an evil hour, he remarked that he was extremely averse to this ruinous practice, which he was convinced the people could ill afford; and said that, for his own part, he would be perfectly satisfied to dine on a fowl. Ranald had an illegitimate

brother (or, as some say, an uncle's son), who was born and bred on the estate. He was many years older than the young Clanranald, and was possessed of very superior abilities in his way. He was active, brave, and ambitious, to which were added much address and shrewdness. Having always resided in Moidart, where he associated with the people, and had rendered himself very popular, he had acquired the appellation of *Ian Muidartich*, or John of Moidart,—a much more endearing distinction than *Gaulta*.

The remark Ranald had made as to the extravagance of his people gave great offence ; and the preference he gave to a fowl was conceived to indicate a sordid disposition, unbecoming the representative of so great a family. John Muidartich and his friends encouraged these ideas, and Ranald was soon known by the yet more contemptuous appellation of “Ranald of the Hens.” He soon left Moidart, and returned to his grandfather's house. His brother (and now his opponent) remained in that country, and he used all the means in his power to strengthen his interest. He married the daughter of Macdonald of Ardnamurchan, the head of a numerous and turbulent tribe, whose estate bordered on Moidart, and his intention to oppose Ranald became daily more evident. Several attempts were made by mutual friends to effect a compromise, without any permanent result. At length a conference between the brothers was appointed at Inverlochy, where Ranald attended, accompanied by old Lovat and a considerable body of his clan ; but especially a very large portion of the principal gentlemen of his name were present. John also appeared, and, to prevent any suspicion of violence, the number of his attendants was but small,

and his demeanour was pacific and unassuming.

Lovat made proposals on the part of his grandson, and with very little hesitation they were acceded to by John and his friends. All parties appeared to be highly pleased, and they separated,—John and his small party directing their course homeward, whilst Ranald accompanied his aged relation to his own country, which was much more distant.

John of Moidart, however, was all along playing a deep game : he ordered a strong body of his father-in-law's people to lie in ambush in a certain spot near the path by which Lovat and his men must necessarily pass on their return home ; and he took care to join them himself, by travelling all night across the mountains.

The Frasers and young Clanranald appeared, and they were attacked by their wily foe. The combat was fearfully bloody and fatal. It is said that no more than six of Lovat's party escaped, and not triple that number of their enemies—Ranald, unquestionably the lawful representative of the family, fell covered with wounds, after having given proof that he was possessed of the greatest bravery ; and his memory is to this day respected even among the descendants of those who destroyed him. John of Moidart obtained possession of the whole estate, and led a very turbulent life. Tradition says that he compromised the claims of Macdonald of Morar for a third part of his lands, which he yielded up to him on relinquishing further right.

The conflict is distinguished by the designation of *Blar Leine*, or the Battle of the Shirts, the combatants having stripped themselves during the action. It was fought at the eastern end of Loch Lochy, near the line of the Caledonian Canal, in July 1554.—*Literary Gazette*.

THE FRENCH SPY.

BY JOHN GALT.

ONE day—in the month of August it was—I had gone on some private concernment of my own to Kilmarnock, and Mr Boobie, who was then oldest bailie, naturally officiated as chief magistrate in my stead.

There had been, as the world knows, a disposition, on the part of the grand monarque of that time, to invade and conquer this country, the which made it a duty incumbent on all magistrates to keep a vigilant eye on the incomings and outgoings of aliens and other suspectable persons. On the said day, and during my absence, a Frenchman, that could speak no manner of English, somehow was discovered in the Cross Key Inn. What he was, or where he came from, nobody at the time could tell, as I was informed; but there he was, having come into the house at the door, with a bundle in his hand, and a portmanteau on his shoulder, like a traveller out of some vehicle of conveyance. Mrs Drammer, the landlady, did not like his looks; for he had toozy black whiskers, was lank and wan, and moreover deformed beyond human nature, as she said, with a parrot nose, and had no cravat, but only a bit black riband drawn through two button-holes, fastening his ill-coloured sark-neck, which gave him altogether something of an unwholesome, outlandish appearance.

Finding he was a foreigner, and understanding that strict injunctions were laid on the magistrates by the king and government anent the egressing of such persons, she thought, for the credit of her house, and the safety of the community at large, that it behoved her to send word to me, then provost, of this man's visibility among us; but as I was not at home, Mrs Pawkie, my

wife, directed the messenger to Bailie Boobie's. The bailie was, at all times, overly ready to claught at an alarm; and when he heard the news, he went straight to the council-room, and sending for the rest of the council, ordered the alien enemy, as he called the forlorn Frenchman, to be brought before him. By this time the suspicion of a spy in the town had spread far and wide; and Mrs Pawkie told me, that there was a pallid consternation in every countenance when the black and yellow man—for he had not the looks of the honest folks of this country—was brought up the street between two of the town officers, to stand an examine before Bailie Boobie.

Neither the bailie, nor those that were then sitting with him, could speak any French language, and “the alien enemy” was as little master of our tongue. I have often wondered how the bailie did not jalouse that he could be no spy, seeing how, in that respect, he wanted the main faculty. But he was under the enchantment of a panic, partly thinking also, perhaps, that he was to do a great exploit for the government in my absence.

However, the man was brought before him, and there was he, and them all, speaking loud out to one another as if they had been hard of hearing, when I, on coming home from Kilmarnock, went to see what was going on in the council. Considering that the procedure had been in hand some time before my arrival, I thought it judicious to leave the whole business with those present, and to sit still as a spectator; and really it was very comical to observe how the bailie was driven to his wits'-end by the poor lean and yellow Frenchman, and in what a pucker of passion the

panel put himself at every new interlocutor, none of which he could understand. At last, the bailie getting no satisfaction—how could he?—he directed the man's portmanteau and bundle to be opened; and in the bottom of the forementioned package, there, to be sure, was found many a mystical and suspicious paper, which no one could read; among others, there was a strange map, as it then seemed to all present.

"I' gude faith," cried the bailie, with a keckle of exultation, "here's proof enough now. This is a plain map o' the Frith o' Clyde, all the way to the Tail of the Bank at Greenock. This muckle place is Arran; that round ane is the Craig of Ailsa; the wee ane between is Pladda. Gentlemen, gentlemen, this is a sore discovery; there will be hanging and quartering on this." So he ordered the man to be forthwith committed as a king's prisoner to the tolbooth; and turning to me said—"My Lord Provost, as ye have not been present throughout the whole of this troublesome affair, I'll e'en gie an account mysel to the Lord Advocate of what we have done." I thought, at the time, there was something fey and overly forward in this, but I assented; for I know not what it was that seemed to me as if there was something neither right nor regular; indeed, to say the

truth, I was no ill pleased that the bailie took on him what he did; so I allowed him to write himself to the Lord Advocate; and, as the sequel showed, it was a blessed prudence on my part that I did so. For no sooner did his lordship receive the bailie's terrifying letter, than a special king's messenger was sent to take the spy into Edinburgh Castle; and nothing could surpass the great importance that Bailie Booble made of himself on the occasion, on getting the man into a coach, and two dragoons to guard him into Glasgow.

But oh! what a dejected man was the miserable Bailie Booble, and what a laugh rose from shop and chamber, when the tidings came out from Edinburgh that "the alien enemy" was but a French cook coming over from Dublin, with the intent to take up the trade of a confectioner in Glasgow, and that the map of the Clyde was nothing but a plan for the outset of a fashionable table—the bailie's island of Arran being the roast beef, and the Craig of Ailsa the plum-pudding, and Pladda a butter-boat. Nobody enjoyed the jocularity of the business more than myself; but I trembled when I thought of the escape that my honour and character had with the Lord Advocate. I trow, Bailie Booble never set himself so forward from that day to this.—"The Provost."



THE MINISTER'S BEAT.

A man he was to all the country dear.

Even children followed with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.—*Goldsmith*.

CHAPTER I.

"I AM just about to make a round of friendly visits," said the minister; "and as far as our roads lie together, you will perhaps go with me. You are a bad visitor, I know, Mr Frank; but most of my calls will be where forms are unknown, and etiquette dispensed with."

I am indeed a bad visitor, which, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, means no visitor at all; but I own the temptation of seeing my worthy friend's reception, and the hope of coming in for a share of the cordial welcome he was sure to call forth, overcame my scruples; especially as in cottages and farm-steadings there is generally something to be learned even during a morning call;—some trait of unsophisticated nature to be smiled at, or some sturdy lesson of practical wisdom to be treasured for future use.

We had not ridden far when my companion, turning up a pretty rough cart-road leading to a large farmhouse on the right, said, with an arch smile,—"I love what our superstitious forefathers would esteem a lucky beginning even to a morning's ride, and am glad ours commences with a wedding visit. Peter Bandster has taken a wife in my absence, and I must go and call him to account for defrauding me of the ploy. Have you heard anything, Mr Francis, about the bride?"

More than I could wish, thinks I to myself; for my old duenna, who indemnifies herself for my lack of hospitality by assiduous frequentation of all marriages, christenings, and gossipings abroad, had deaved me for the last

(15)

three weeks with philippics about this unlucky wedding. The folly of Peter in marrying above his own line; the ignorance of the bride, who scarce knew lint-yarn from tow, or bere from barley; her unpardonable accomplishments of netting purses and playing on the spinnet; above all, her plated candlesticks, flounced gown, and fashionable bonnet, had furnished Hannah with inexhaustible matter for that exercise of the tongue, which the Scots call "rhyming," and the English "ringing the changes;" to which, as to all other noises, custom can alone render one insensible.

I had no mind to damp the minister's benevolent feelings towards the couple, and contented myself with answering, that I heard the bride was both bonnie and braw. The good man shook his head. "We have an old proverb, and a true one," said he, "a bonnie bride is sune buskit;" but I have known gawdy butterflies cast their painted wings, and become excellent housewives in the end."

"But there stands Peter—no very blithe bridegroom, methinks!" said I, as my eye rested on the tall and usually jolly young farmer, musing disconsolately in his cattle-yard over what appeared to be the body of a dead cow. He started on seeing the minister, as if ashamed of his sorrow or its cause, and came forward to meet us, struggling to adapt his countenance a little better to his circumstances.

"Well, Peter," said the minister, frankly extending his hand, "and so I am to wish you joy! I thought when I gave you your name, five-and-twenty

20

years ago, if it pleased God to spare me, to have given you your helpmate also; but what signifies it by whom the knot is tied, if true love and the blessing of God go with it? Nay, never hang your head, Peter; but tell me, before we beat up the young gudewife's quarters, what you were leaning over so wae-like when we rode forward."

"Od, sir," cried Peter, reddening up, "it wasna the value o' the beast, though she was the best cow in my mother's byre, but the way I lost her, that pat me a wee out o' tune. My Jessie (for I maunna ca' her gudewife, it seems, nor mistress neither) is an ill guide o' kye, ay, and what's waur, o' lasses. We had a tea-drinking last night, nae doubt, as new-married folk should; and what for no?—I'se warrant my mither had them too in her daft days. But she didna keep the house asteer the hale night wi' fiddles and dancin', and it neither New Year nor Hansel Monday; nor she didna lie in her bed till aught or nine o'clock, as my Jess does; na, nor yet"—

"But what has all this to do with the loss of your cow, Peter?"

"Ower muckle, sir; ower muckle. The lasses and lads liket reels as weel as their mistress, and whisky a hantle better. They a' sleepit in, and mysel among the lave. Nae mortal ever lookit the airt that puir Blue Bell was in, and her at the very calving; and this morning, when the byre-door was opened, she was lying stiff and stark, wi' a dead calf beside her. It's no the cow, sir (though it was but the last market I had the offer o' fifteen pund for her), it's the thought that she was sae sair neglected amang me, and my Jess, and her tawpies o' lasses."

"Come, come, Peter," said the good minister, "you seem to have been as much to blame as the rest; and as for your young town bride, she maun creep, as the auld wives say, before she can gang. Country thrift can no more be

learnt in a day than town breeding; and of that your wife, they say, has her share."

"Ower muckle, may be," was the half-muttered reply, as he marshalled us into the house. The "ben" end of the old-fashioned farm-house, which, during the primitive sway of Peter's mother, had exhibited the usual decorations of an aumrie, a clock, and a pair of press-beds, with a clean swept ingle, and carefully sanded floor, had undergone a metamorphosis not less violent than some of Ovid's or Harlequin's. The "aumrie" had given place to a satin-wood work-table, the clock to a mirror, and the press-beds (whose removal no one could regret) to that object of Hannah's direst vituperations—the pianoforte; while the fire-place revelled in all the summer luxury of elaborately twisted shavings, and the once sanded floor was covered with an already soiled and faded carpet, to whose delicate colours Peter, fresh from the clay furrows, and his two sheep-dogs dripping from the pond, had nearly proved equally fatal.

In this *sanctum sanctorum* sat the really pretty bride, in all the dignity of outraged feeling which ignorance of life and a lavish perusal of romances could inspire, on witnessing the first cloud on her usually good-natured husband's brow. She hastily cleared up her ruffled looks, gave the minister a cordial, though somewhat affected welcome, and dropped me a curtsey which twenty years' rustication enabled me very inadequately to return.

The good pastor bent on this new lamb of his fold a benignant yet searching glance, and seemed watching where, amid the fluent small talk which succeeded, he might edge in a word of playful yet serious import to the happiness of the youthful pair. The bride was stretching forth her hand with all the dignity of her new station, to ring the bell for cake and wine, when Peter

(whose spleen was evidently waiting for a vent), hastily starting up, cried out, "Mistress ! if ye're ower grand to serve the minister yoursel, there's ane 'ill be proud to do't. There shall nae quean fill a glass for him in this house while it ca's me master. My mither wad hae served him on her bended knees, gin he wad hae let her ; and ye think it ower muckle to bring ben the bridal bread to him ! Oh, Jess, Jess ! I canna awa wi' your town ways and town airs."

The bride coloured and pouted ; but there gathered a large drop in her eye, and the pastor hailed it as an earnest of future concession. He took her hand kindly, and put it into Peter's not reluctant one. "'Spring showers make May flowers,' my dear lassie, says the old proverb, and I trust out o' these little clouds will spring your future happiness. You, Jessy, have chosen an honest, worthy, kind-hearted, country husband, whose love will be well worth the sacrifice of a few second-hand graces. And you, Peter, have taken, for better and for worse, a lassie, in whose eye, in spite of foreign airs, I read a heart to be won by kindness. Bear and forbear, my dear bairns—let each be apter to yield than the other to exact. You are both travelling to a better country ; see that ye fall not out by the way."

The bride by this time was sobbing, and Peter's heart evidently softened. So leaving the pair to seal their reconciliation in this favourable mood, the good minister and I mounted our horses, and rode off without further parley.

We were just turning the corner of the loan to regain the high road, when a woman from a cottage in an adjoining field came running to intercept us. There was in her look a wildness bordering on distraction, but it was evidently of no painful kind. She seemed like one not recovered from the first shock of some delightful surprise, too much for the frail fabric of mortality to bear without tottering to its very foun-

dations. The minister checked his horse, whose bridle she grasped convulsively, panting partly from fatigue and more from emotion, endeavouring, but vainly, to give utterance to the tidings with which her bosom laboured. Twice she looked up, shook her head, and was silent; then with a strong effort faltered out,— "He's come back !—the Lord be praised for it !"

"Who is come back, Jenny ?" said the pastor, in the deepest tone of sympathy,— "Is it little Andrew, ye mean ?"

"Andrew !" echoed the matron, with an expression of contempt, which at any other time this favourite grandchild would have been very far from calling forth—"Andrew !—Andrew's *father*, I mean my ain first-born son Jamie, that I wore mournings for till they would wear nae langer, and thought lying fifty fathoms down in solid ice, in yon wild place Greenland, or torn to pieces wi' savage bears, like the mocking bairns in Scripture,—he's yonder !" said she, wildly pointing to the house ; "he's yonder, living, and living like ; and oh, gin ye wad come, and maybe speak a word in season to us, we might be better able to praise the Lord, as is His due."

We turned our horses' heads, and followed her as she ran, or rather flew, towards the cottage with the instinct of some animal long separated from its offspring. The little boy before mentioned ran out to hold our horses, and whispered as the minister stooped to stroke his head, "Daddy's come hame frae the sea."

The scene within the cottage baffles description. The old mother, exhausted with her exertion, had sunk down beside her son on the edge of the bed on which he was sitting, where his blind and bed-rid father lay, and clasped his withered hands in speechless prayer. His lips continued to move, unconscious of our presence, and ever and anon he

stretched forth a feeble arm to ascertain the actual vicinity of his long-mourned son. On a low stool, before the once gay and handsome, but now frost-nipt and hunger-worn mariner, sat his young wife, her hand firmly clasped in his, her fixed eye riveted on his countenance, giving no other sign of life than a convulsive pressure of the former, or a big drop descending unwiped from the latter ; while her unemployed hand was plucking quite mechanically the badge of widowhood from her duffle cloak, which (having just reached home as her husband knocked at his father's door) was yet lying across her knee.

The poor sailor gazed on all around him with somewhat of a bewildered air, but most of all upon a rosy creature between his knees, of about a year and a half old, born just after his departure, and who had only learned the sad word "Daddy," from the childish prattle of his older brother Andrew, and his sisters. Of these, one had been summoned, wild and barelegged, from the herding, the other, meek and modest, from the village school. The former, idle and intractable, half shrunk in fear of her returned parent's well-remembered strictness ; the other, too young not to have forgotten his person, only wondered whether this was the Father in heaven of whom she had heard so often. She did not think it could be so, for there was no grief or trouble there, and this father looked as if he had seen much of both.

Such was the group to whose emotions, almost too much for human nature, our entrance gave a turn.

"Jamie," said the good pastor (gently pressing the still united hands of the mariner and his faithful Annie), "you are welcome back from the gates of death and the perils of the deep. Well is it said, that they who go down to the sea in ships see more of the wonders of the Lord than other men ; but it was not from storm and tempests alone that

you have been delivered, — cold and famine, want and nakedness—wild beasts to devour, and darkness to dismay ;—these have been around your dreary path—but He that was with you was mightier than all that were against you ; and you are returned a living man to tell the wondrous tale. Let us praise the Lord, my friends, for His goodness, and His wonderful works to the children of men." We all knelt down and joined in the brief but fervent prayer that followed. The stranger's heartfelt sigh of sympathy mingled with the pastor's pious orisons, with the feeble accents of decrepitude, the lisp of wondering childhood, the soul-felt piety of rescued manhood, and the deep, unutterable gratitude of a wife and mother's heart !

For such high-wrought emotions prayer is the only adequate channel. They found vent in it, and were calmed and subdued to the level of ordinary intercourse. The minister kindly addressed Jamie, and drew forth, by his judicious questions, the leading features of that marvellous history of peril and privations, endured by the crew of a Greenland ship detained a winter in the ice, with which all are now familiar, but of which a Parry or a Franklin can perhaps alone appreciate the horrors. They were related with a simplicity that did them ample justice.

"I never despaired, sir," said the hardy mariner ; "we were young and stout. Providence, aye when at the warst, did us some gude turn, and this kept up our hearts. We had mostly a' wives or mithers at hame, and kent that prayers wadna be wanting for our safety ; and little as men may think o' them on land, or even at sea on a prosperous voyage,—a winter at the Pole makes prayers precious. We had little to do but sleep ; and oh, the nights were lang ! I was aye a great dreamer ; and, ye maunna be angry, sir (to the minister), the seeing Annie and the

bairns amaint ilka time I lay down, and aye braw and buskit, did mair to keep up my hopes than a' the rest. I never could see wee Jamie, though," said he, smiling, and kissing the child on his knee ; "I saw a cradle weel enough, but the face o' the bit creature in't I never could mak out, and it vexed me ; for whiles I thought my babe was dead, and whiles I feared it had never been born ; but God be praised he's here, and no that unlike mysel neither."

"Annie !" said the minister, gently loosing her renewed grasp of Jamie's hand, "you are forgetting your duty as a gudewife—we maun drink to Jamie's health and happiness ere we go—we'll steal a glass or two out of old Andrew's cordial bottle ; a drop of this day's joy will be better to him than it a'."

"Atweel, that's true," said the old father, with a distinctness of utterance, and acuteness of hearing, he had not manifested for many months. The bottle was brought, the health of the day went round ; I shook the weather-beaten sailor warmly by the hand, and begging leave to come and hear more of his story at a fitter season, followed the minister to the door.

"Andrew," said he, giving the little patient equerry a bright new sixpence, "tell your daddy I gave you this for being a dutiful son to your mother when he was at the sea."

The child's eye glistened as he ran into the cottage to execute the welcome command, and we rode off, our hearts too full for much communication.

CHAPTER II.

THE day was advancing. These two scenes had encroached deeply on the privileged hours for visiting, and the minister, partly to turn the account of our thoughts into a less agitating channel, partly to balance the delights of the last hour with their due counterpoise of alloy, suggested the propriety of going next to pay, at the house of his patron, the laird of the parish, the visit of duty and ceremony, which his late return, and a domestic affliction in the family, rendered indispensable. There were reasons which made my going equally proper and disagreeable ; and formal calls being among the many evils which are lightened by participation, I gladly availed myself of the shelter of the minister's name and company.

Mr Morison, of Castle Morison, was one of those spoiled children of fortune, whom in her cruel kindness she renders miserable. He had never known contradiction, and a straw across his path made him chafe like a resisted torrent ; he had never known sorrow, and was,

consequently, but half acquainted with joy ; he was a stranger to compassion, and consequently himself an object of pity to all who could allow for the force of early education in searing and hardening the human heart. He had, as a boy, made his mother tremble ; it is little to be wondered that in manhood he was the tyrant of his wife and children. Mrs Morison's spirit, originally gentle, was soon broken ; and if her heart was not equally so, it was because she learned reluctantly to despise her tyrant, and found compensation in the double portion of affection bestowed on her by her son and daughters. For the latter, Mr Morison manifested only contempt. There was not a horse in his stable, nor a dog in his kennel, which did not engross more of his attention ; but like the foxes and hares which it was the business of these favourite animals to hunt down, girls could be made to afford no bad sport in a rainy day. It was no wonder, that with them fear usurped the place of reverence for such

a parent. If they did not hate him, they were indebted to their mother's piety and their own sweet dispositions ; and if they neither hated nor envied their only brother, it was not the fault of him, who, by injudicious distinctions and blind indulgence, laid the foundation for envy and all uncharitableness in their youthful bosoms. In that of his favourite, they had the usual effect of generating self-will and rebellion ; and while Jane and Agnes, well knowing nothing they did would be thought right, rarely erred from the path of duty, Edmund, aware that he could scarce do wrong, took care his privileges should not rust for want of exercise.

But though suffered in all minor matters to follow the dictates of caprice, to laugh at his tutor, lame the horse, and break rules (to all others those of the Medes and Persians), with impunity, he found himself suddenly reined up in his headlong career by an equally capricious parent, precisely at the period when restraint was nearly forgotten, and peculiarly irksome. It was tacitly agreed by both parties, that the heir of Castle Morison could only go into the army ; but while the guards or a dragoon regiment was the natural enough ambition of Edmund, Morison was suddenly seized with a fit of contradiction, which he chose to style economy, and talked of a marching regiment, with perhaps an extra £100 per annum to the undoubted heir of nearly ten thousand a-year. Neither would yield—the one had taught, the other learned, stubbornness ; and Edmund, backed by the sympathy of the world, and the clamours of his companions, told his father he had changed his mind, and was going to India with a near relation, about to proceed to Bombay in a high official character.

Morison had a peculiar prejudice against the East, and a personal pique towards the cousin to whose patronage Edmund had betaken himself. His rage was as boundless as his former

partiality, and the only consolation his poor wife felt when her darling son left his father's house, alike impenitent and unblest, was, that her boy's disposition was originally good, and would probably recover the ascendant ; and that it was out of the power of her husband to make his son a beggar as well as an exile. The estate was strictly entailed, and the knowledge of this, while it embittered Morison's sense of his son's disobedience, no doubt strengthened the feeling of independence so natural to headstrong youth.

While Morison was perverting legal ingenuity, in vain hopes of being able to disinherit his refractory heir, his unnatural schemes were anticipated by a mightier agent. An epidemic fever carried off, in one short month (about two years after his quitting England), the unreconciled, but no longer unconciliatory exile, and his young and beautiful bride, the daughter of his patron, his union with whom had been construed, by the causeless antipathy of his father, into a fresh cause of indignation. Death, whose cold hand loosens this world's grasp, and whose deep voice stills this world's strife, only tightens the bonds of nature, and teaches the stormiest spirits to "part in peace." Edmund lived to write to his father a few lines of undissembled and unconditional penitence ; to own, that if the path of duty had been rugged, he had in vain sought happiness beyond it, and to entreat that the place he had forfeited in his father's favour might be transferred to his unfondling child.

All this had been conveyed to Mr Monteith and myself by the voice of rumour some days before, and we had been more shocked than surprised to learn that Morison's resentment had survived its object, and that he disclaimed all intention of ever seeing or receiving the infant boy who, it was gall to him to reflect, must inherit his estate. Mrs Morison had exerted, to soften his

hard heart, all the little influence she now possessed. Her tender soul yearned towards her Edmund's child ; and sometimes the thought of seeking a separation, and devoting herself to rear it, crossed her despairing mind. But her daughters were a tie still more powerful to her unhappy home. She could neither leave them, unprotected, to its discomforts, nor conscientiously advise their desertion of a parent, however unworthy ; so she wandered, a paler and sadder inmate than before of her cold and stately mansion ; and her fair, subdued-looking daughters shuddered as they passed the long-locked doors of their brother's nursery and schoolroom.

The accounts of young Morison's death had arrived since the good pastor's departure, and it was with feelings of equal sympathy towards the female part of the family, and sorrow for the unchristian frame of its head, that he prepared for our present visit. As we rode up the old straight avenue, I perceived a postchaise at the door, and instead of shrinking from this probable accession of strangers, felt that any addition to the usually constrained and gloomy family circle must be a relief. On reaching the door, we were struck with a very unusual appendage to the dusty and travel-stained vehicle, in the shape of an ancient, venerable-looking Asiatic, in the dress of his country, beneath whose ample muslin folds he might easily have been mistaken for an old female nurse, a character which, in all its skill and tenderness, was amply sustained by this faithful and attached Oriental. His broken English and passionate gestures excited our attention, already awakened by the singularity of his costume and appearance ; and as we got close to him, the big tears which rolled over his sallow and furrowed cheeks, powerfully called forth our sympathy, and told, better than words, his forcible exclusion from the splendid mansion which had reluctantly admitted within

its precincts the child dearer to him than country and kindred !

Our visit (had it borne less of a pastoral character) had all the appearance of being very ill-timed. There were servants running to and fro in the hall, and loud voices in the dining-room ; and from a little parlour on one side the front door, issued female sobs, mingled with infant wailings in an unknown dialect.

"Thank God !" whispered the minister, "the bairn is fairly in the house. Providence and nature will surely do the rest."

It was not a time to intrude abruptly, so we sent in our names to Mr Morison, and during our pretty long detention on horseback, could not avoid seeing in at the open window of the parlour before-mentioned, a scene which it grieved us to think was only witnessed by ourselves.

Mrs Morison was sitting in a chair (on which she had evidently sunk down powerless), with her son's orphan boy on her knee, the bright dark eyes of the little wild unearthly-looking creature fixed in steadfast gaze on her pale matronly countenance. "No cry, Mama Englis," said the child, as her big tears rolled unheeded on his bosom— "Billy Edmund will be welly welly good." His youngest aunt, whose keen and long-repressed feelings found vent in sobs of mingled joy and agony, was covering his little hands with showers of kisses, while the elder (his father's favourite sister) was comparing behind him the rich dark locks that clustered on his neck with the locket which, since Edmund's departure, had dwelt next her heart.

A message from the laird summoned us from this affecting sight, and, amid the pathetic entreaties of the old Oriental, that we would restore his nursling, we proceeded to the dining-room, made aware of our approach to it by the still-storming, though half-suppressed im-

precations of its hard-hearted master. He was pacing in stern and moody agitation through the spacious apartment. His welcome was evidently extorted, and his face (to use a strong Scripture expression) set as a flint against the voice of remonstrance and exhortation, for which he was evidently prepared. My skilful coadjutor went quite another way to work.

"Mr Morison," said he, apparently unconscious of the poor man's pitiable state of mind, "I came to condole, but I find it is my lot to congratulate. The Lord hath taken away with the one hand, but it has been to give with the other. His blessing be with you and your son's son, whom He hath sent to be the staff and comfort of your age!" This was said with his usual benign frankness, and the hard heart, which would have silenced admonition, and scorned reproof, scarce knew how to repulse the voice of Christian congratulation. He walked about, muttering to himself—"No son of mine—bad breed! Let him go to those who taught his father disobedience, and his mother artifice!—anywhere they please; there is no room for him here."

"Have you seen your grandchild yet, Mr Morison?" resumed the minister, nothing daunted by the continued obduracy of the proud laird. "Let me have the joy of putting him into your arms. You must expect to be a good deal overcome; sweet little fellow, there is a strong likeness!"

A shudder passed across the father's hard frame, and he recoiled as from an adder, when worthy Mr Monteith, gently grasping his arm, sought to draw him, still sullen, though more faintly resisting, towards the other room. A shrill cry of infant agony rose from the parlour as we crossed the hall, and nature never perhaps exhibited a stronger contrast than presented itself between the cruel old man, struggling to escape from the presence of his

grandchild, and the faithful ancient domestic shrieking wildly to be admitted into it.

As I threw open the door for the entrance of the former, little Edmund, whose infant promises of good behaviour had soon given way before the continued society of strangers, was stamping in all the impotence of baby rage (and in this unhallowed mood too faithful a miniature of both father and grandfather), and calling loudly for the old Oriental. With the first glance at the door his exclamations redoubled. We began to fear the worst effect from this abrupt introduction; but no sooner had the beautiful boy (beautiful even in passion) cast a second bewildered glance on his still erect and handsome grandfather, than, clapping his little hands, and calling out, "My Bombay papa!" he flew into his arms!

The servants, concluding the interdict removed by their master's entrance into the apartment, had ceased to obstruct the efforts of the old Hindoo to fly to his precious charge; and while the astonished and fairly overwhelmed Morison's neck was encircled by the infant grasp of his son's orphan boy, his knees were suddenly embraced by that son's devoted and gray-haired domestic.

One arm of little Edmund was instantly loosened from his grandfather's shoulder, and passed round the neck of the faithful old Oriental, who kissed alternately the little cherub hand of his nursling, and the hitherto iron one of the proud laird. It softened, and the hard heart with it! It was long since love—pure unsophisticated love, and spontaneous reverence—had been Morison's portion, and they were proportionally sweet. He buried his face in his grandson's clustering ringlets. We heard a groan deep as when rocks are rending, and the earth heaves with long pent-up fires. It was wildly mingling with childish laughter and hysterical

bursts of female tenderness, as, stealing cautiously and unheeded from the spot, we mounted our horses and rode away.

"God be praised!" said the minister, with a deep-drawn sigh, when, emerging from the gloomy avenue, we regained the cheerful beaten track. "This has been a day of strange dispensations, Mr Francis—we have seen much together to make us wonder at the ways of Providence, to soften, and, I hope, improve our hearts. But, after such solemn scenes, mine (and yours, I doubt not, also) requires something to cheer and lighten it; and I am bound where, if the sight of virtuous happiness can do it, I am sure to succeed. Do let me persuade you to be my com-

panion a little longer, and close this day's visitation at the humble board of, I'll venture to say, the happiest couple in Scotland. I am engaged to christen the first-born of honest Willie Meldrum and his bonnie Helen, and 'to dine, of course, after the ceremony. Mrs Monteith and the bairns will be there to meet me; and, as my friend, you'll be 'welcome as the flowers in May.'

After some slight scruples about intruding on this scene of domestic enjoyment, easily overruled by the hearty assurances of the divine, and my own natural relish for humble life, we marched towards the farmhouse of Blinkbonnie; and during our short ride the minister gave me, in a few words, the history of its inmates.

CHAPTER III.

"I DON'T know, Mr Francis, if you remember a bonny orphan lassie, called Helen Ormiston, whom my wife took some years back into the family to assist her in the care of the bairns. Helen was come of no ungentle kin; but poverty had sat down heavily on her father and mother, and sunk them into an early grave; and it was a god-send to poor Helen to get service in a house where poverty would be held no reproach to her. If ye ever saw the creature, ye wadna easily forget her. Many bonnier, blither lassies are to be seen daily; but such a look of settled serenity and downcast modesty ye might go far to find. It quite won my wife's heart and mine, and more hearts than ours, as I shall tell you presently. As for the bairns, they just doated on Helen, and she on them; and my poor youngest, that is now with God, during all her long, long decline, was little if ever off her knee. No wonder, then, that Helen grew pale and thin, ate little, and slept less. I first set it down to anxiety, and, when the innocent bairn was re-

leased, to grief; and from these, no doubt, it partly arose. But when all was over, and when weeks had passed away, when even my poor wife dried her mother's tears, and I could say, 'God's will be done,' still Helen grew paler and thinner, and refused to be comforted; so I saw there was more in it than appeared, and I bade her open her heart to me; and open it she did, with a flood of tears that would have melted a stone.

"Sir," said she, "I maun go away. I think it will kill me to leave you and Mrs Monteith, and the dear bairns in the nursery, and wee Jeanie's grave in the kirkyard; but stay I canna, and I will tell you why. It is months, ay, amast years, since Willie Meldrum, auld Blinkbonnie's son, fell in fancy wi' me, and a sair sair heart, I may say, I have had ever sin syne. His auld hard father, they tell me, swears (wi' sic oaths as wad gar ye grue to hear them) that he will cut him off wi' a shilling if ever he thinks o' me; and oh! it wad be a puir return for the lad's kindness to do him sic an ill turn! so I maun awa'

out of the country till the auld man dies, or Willie taks a wife to his mind, for I've seen ower muckle o' poverty, Mr Monteith, to be the cause o't to ony man, though I whiles think it wad be naething to me, that's sae weel used till't mysel.'

"Helen," said I, "when did Willie Meldrum find opportunities to gain your heart? I never saw him in the house in my life."

"Oh, sir!" said she, "gin I could hae bidden in the house, he wad never hae seen me either; but I was forced to walk out wi' the bairns, and there was nae place sae quiet and out o' the gate, but Willie was sure to find me out. If I gaed down the burn, Willie was aye fishing; if I gaed up the loan, there was aye something to be dune about the kye. At the kirk door, Willie was aye at hand to spier for your honour, and gie the bairns posies; and after our sair distress, when I was little out for mony a day, I couldna slip out ae moonlight night, to sit a moment upon Jeanie's grave, but Willie was there like a ghaist aside me, and made my very heart loup to my mouth!"

"And do you return his good-will, Helen?" said I, gravely.

"Oh, sir," said the poor thing, trembling, "I darena tell you a lie. I tried to be as proud and as shy as a lassie should be to ane abune her degree, and that might do sae muckle better, puir fallow! I tried to look another gate when I saw him, and mak mysel deaf when he spoke o' his love; but oh! his words were sae true and kindly, that I doubt mine werena aye sae short and saucy as they sud hae been. It's hard for a tocherless, fatherless lassie to be cauldrife to the lad that wad tak her to his heart and hame; but oh! it wad be harder still, if she was to requite him wi' a father's curse! It's ill eneuch to hae nae parents o' my ain, without makin' mischief wi' ither folk's. The auld man gets dourer and dourer ilka

day, and the young ane dafter and dafter—sae ye maun just send me aff the country to some decent service, till Willie's a free man, or a bridegroom."

"My dear Helen," said I, "you are a good upright girl, and I will forward your honest intentions. If it be God's will that Willie and you come together, the hearts of men are in His hand. If otherwise, yours will never at least reproach you with bringing ruin on your lover's head."

"So I sent Helen, Mr Francis, to my brother's in the south country, where she proved as great a blessing and as chief a favourite as she had been with us. I saw her some months afterwards; and though her bloom had not returned, she was tranquil and contented, as one who has cast her lot into the lap of Heaven.

"Well, to make a long story short, Willie, though he was unreasonable enough, good, worthy lad as he is, to take in dudgeon Helen's going away (though he might have guessed it was all for his good), was too proud, or too constant, to say he would give her up, or bind himself never to marry her, as his father insisted. So the old man, one day, after a violent altercation, made his will, and left all his hard-won siller to a rich brother in Liverpool, who neither wanted nor deserved it. Willie, upon this quarrel, had left home very unhappy, and stayed away some time, and during his absence old Blink-bonnie was taken extremely ill. When he thought himself dying, he sent for me (I had twice called in vain before), and you may be sure I did my best not to let him depart in so unchristian a frame towards his only child. I did not deny his right to advise his son in the choice of a wife; but I told him he might search the world before he found one more desirable than Helen, whose beauty and sense would secure his son's steadiness, and her frugality and sobriety double his substance. I told him how

she had turned a deaf ear to all his son's proposals of a clandestine marriage and made herself the sacrifice to his own unjust and groundless prejudices. Dying men are generally open to conviction ; and I got a fresh will made in favour of his son, with a full consent to his marriage honourably inserted among its provisions. This he deposited with me, feeling no great confidence in the lawyer who had made his previous settlement, and desired me to produce it when he was gone.

"It so happened that I was called to a distance before his decease, and did not return till some days after the funeral. Willie had flown home on hearing of his father's danger, and had the comfort to find him completely softened, and to receive from his nearly speechless parent many a silent demonstration of returned affection. It was, therefore, a doubly severe shock to him, on opening the first will (the only one forthcoming in my absence), to find himself cut off from everything, except the joint lease of the farm, and instead of five thousand pounds, not worth a shilling in the world. His first exclamation, I was told, was, 'It's hard to get baith scorn and skaith—to lose baith poor Helen and the gear. If I had lost it for her, they might hae ta'en it that likit !'

"About a week after, I came home and found on my table a letter from Helen. She had heard of Willie's misfortune, and in a way the most modest and engaging, expressed herself ready, if I thought it would still be acceptable, to share his poverty and toil with him through life. 'I am weel used to work,' said she, 'and, but for you, wad hae been weel used to want. If Willie will let me bear a share o' his burden, I trust in God we may warsle through thegither ; and, to tell you the truth,' added she, with her usual honesty, 'I wad rather things were ordered as they are, than that Willie's wealth should shame my poverty.'

"I put this letter in one pocket, and his father's will in the other, and walked over to Blinkbonnie. Willie was working with the manly resolution of one who has no other resource. I told him I was glad to see him so little cast down.

"Sir,' said he, 'I'll no say but I am vexed that my father gaed to his grave wi' a grudge against me, the mair sae, as when he squeezed my hand on his death-bed I thought a' was forgotten. But siller is but waird's gear, and I could thole the want o't, an' it had nae been for Helen Ormiston, that I hoped to hae gotten to share it wi' me. She may sune do better now, wi' that bonnie face and kind heart o' hers !'

"It is indeed a kind heart, Willie,' answered I : 'if ever I doubted it, this would have put me to shame !'—So saying, I reached him the letter, and oh, that Helen could have seen the flush of grateful surprise that crossed his manly brow as he read it ! It passed away, though, quickly, and he said, with a sigh, Very kind, Mr Monteith, and very like hersel ; but I canna take advantage o' an auld gude will, now that I canna reward it as it deserves !'

"And what if ye could, Willie ?" said I, 'as far, at least, as worldly wealth can requite true affection ? There is your father's will, made when it pleased God to touch his heart, and you are as rich a man as you were when Helen Ormiston first refused to make you a beggar.'

"Willie was not insensible to this happy change in his prospects ; but his kind heart was chiefly soothed by his father's altered feelings, and at the honourable mention of Helen's name he fairly began to greet.

"The sequel is easily told ; but I think the jaunt I made to Tweeddale with Willie, to bring back Helen Ormiston in triumph, was the proudest journey of my life.

"A year ago I married them at the manse, amid much joy, but abundance

of tears in the nursery. To-day, when, according to an old promise, I am to christen my name-son Charlie, I expect to be fairly deaved with the clamorous rejoicings of my young fry, who, I verily believe, have not slept this week for thinking of it. But" (pulling out his watch), "it is near four o'clock : sad quality hour for Blinkbonnie ! The hotch-potch will be turned into porridge, and the how-towdies burnt to sticks, if we don't make haste!"

I wish, my dear reader, you could see the farm of Blinkbonnie, lying as it does on a gently sloping bank, sheltered from the north by a wooded crag or knoll, flanked upon the east by a group of venerable ashes, enlivened and perfumed on the west by a gay luxuriant garden, and open on the south to such a sea-view, as none but dwellers on the Firth of Forth have any idea of. Last Saturday, it was the very *beau ideal* of rural comfort and serenity. The old trees were reposing, after a course of somewhat boisterous weather, in all the dignity and silence of years. The crows, their usual inhabitants, having gone on their Highland excursion, those fantastic interlopers, Helen's peacocks (a present from the children at the manse), were already preparing for their "siesta" on the topmost boughs. Beneath the spreading branches the cows were dreaming delightfully, in sweet oblivion of the heats of noon. In an adjoining paddock, graceful foals, and awkward calves, indulged in their rival gambols ; while shrieks of joy from behind the garden hedge, told these were not the only happy young things in creation.

We deposited our horses in a stable, to whose comforts they bore testimony by an approving neigh, and made our way by a narrow path, bordered with sweet-brier and woodbine, to the front of the house. Its tall, good-looking young master came hastily to meet us, and I would not have given his blushing

welcome, and the bashful scrape that accompanied it, for all the most elaborate courtesies of Chesterfield.

No sooner were our footsteps heard approaching, than out poured the minister's whole family from the little honeysuckles porch, with glowing faces and tangled hair, and frocks, probably white some hours before, but which now claimed affinity with every bush in the garden.

Mrs Monteith gently joined in the chorus of reproaches to papa for being so late; but the look with which she was answered seemed to satisfy her, as it usually did, that he could not be in fault. We were then ushered into the parlour, whose substantial comforts, and exquisite consistency, spoke volumes in favour of its mistress. Opulence might be traced in the excellent quality of the homely furniture—in the liberal display of antique china (particularly the choice and curious christening-bowl)—but there was nothing incongruous, nothing out of keeping, nothing to make you for a moment mistake this first-rate farmhouse parlour for a clumsy, ill-fancied drawing-room. A few pots of roses, a few shelves of books, bore testimony to Helen's taste and education ; but there were neither exotics nor romances in the collection ; and the piece of furniture evidently dearest in her eyes was the cradle, in which reposed, amid all the din of this joyous occasion, the yet unchristened hero of the day. It is time to speak of Helen herself, and she was just what, from her story, I knew she must be. The actors, in some striking drama of human life, often disappoint us by their utter dissimilitude to the pictures of our mind's eye, but Helen was precisely the perfection of a gentle, modest, self-possessed Scottish lassie,—the mind, in short, of Jeanie Deans, with the personal advantages of poor Effie. Her dress was as suitable as anything else. Her gown, white as snow, and her cap of the nicest materials, were

neither of them on the pattern of my lady's ; but they had a matronly grace of their own, worth a thousand second-hand fashions ; and when Helen, having awakened her first-born, delivered him, with sweet maternal solicitude, into the outstretched arms of the minister's proud and favoured youngest girl, I thought I never saw a picture worthier the pencil of Correggio. It was completed, when, bending in all the graceful awkwardness of a novice over the group, Willie received his boy into his arms, and vowed before his pastor and his God to discharge a parent's duty, while a parent's transport sparkled in his eyes.

I have sat, as Shakspeare says, "at good men's feasts ere now"—have ate

turtle at the lord mayor's and venison at peers' tables, and *soufflés* at diplomatic dinners—have ate sturgeon at St Petersburg, and mullet at Naples ; mutton in Wales, and grouse in the Highlands ; roast-beef with John Bull, and *vol au vent* at Beauvilliers' ; but I have no hesitation in saying that the hotch-potch and how-towdies of Blink-bonnie excelled them all. How far the happy human faces of all ages round the table contributed to enhance the gusto, I do not pretend to decide ; but I can tell Mr Véry that, among all his *consommés*, there is nothing like a judicious mixture of youth and beauty, with manliness, integrity, and virtue.—*Blackwood's Magazine*.

A SCOTTISH GENTLEWOMAN OF THE LAST CENTURY.

BY SUSAN EDMONSTONE FERRIER.

"THOUGH last, not least of nature's works, I must now introduce you to a friend of mine," said Mr Douglas, as they bent their steps towards the Castle-hill of Edinburgh. "Mrs Violet Macshake is an aunt of my mother's, whom you must often have heard of, and the last remaining branch of the noble race of Girnachgowl."

"I am afraid she is rather a formidable person, then?" said Mary.

Her uncle hesitated.

"No, not formidable,—only rather particular, as all old people are ; but she is very good-hearted."

"I understand ; in other words, she is very disagreeable. All ill-tempered people, I observe, have the character of being good-hearted, or else all good-hearted people are ill-tempered—I can't tell which."

"It is more than reputation with

her," said Mr Douglas, somewhat angrily ; "for she is, in reality, a very good-hearted woman, as I experienced when a boy at college. Many a crown-piece and half-guinea I used to get from her. Many a scold, to be sure, went along with them ; but that, I daresay, I deserved. Besides, she is very rich, and I am her reputed heir ; therefore gratitude and self-interest combine to render her extremely amiable in my estimation."

They had now reached the airy dwelling where Mrs Macshake resided, and having rung, the door was at length most deliberately opened by an ancient, sour-visaged, long-waisted female, who ushered them into an apartment, the *coup d'œil* of which struck a chill to Mary's heart. It was a good-sized room, with a bare sufficiency of small-legged dining-

tables, and lank hair-cloth chairs, ranged in high order round the walls. Although the season was advanced, and the air piercing cold, the grate stood smiling in all the charms of polished steel ; and the mistress of the mansion was seated by the side of it in an arm-chair, still in its summer position. She appeared to have no other occupation than what her own meditations afforded ; for a single glance sufficed to show that not a vestige of book or work was harboured there. She was a tall, large-boned woman, whom even Time's iron hand had scarcely bent, as she merely stooped at the shoulders. She had a drooping snuffy nose, a long turned-up chin, small, quick, gray eyes, and her face projected far beyond her figure, with an expression of shrewd, restless curiosity. She wore a mode (not *a-la-mode*) bonnet, and cardinal of the same ; a pair of clogs over her shoes, and black silk mittens on her arms.

As soon as she recognized Mr Douglas, she welcomed him with much cordiality, shook him long and heartily by the hand,—patted him on the back,—looked into his face with much seeming satisfaction ; and, in short, gave all the demonstrations of gladness usual with gentlewomen of a certain age. Her pleasure, however, appeared to be rather an *impromptu* than a habitual feeling ; for as the surprise wore off, her visage resumed its harsh and sarcastic expression, and she seemed eager to efface any agreeable impression her reception might have excited.

"An' wha thought o' seein' you e'noo ?" said she, in a quick gabbling voice ; "what's brought you to the toun ? Are ye come to spend your honest faither's siller, ere he's weel cauld in his grave, puir man ?"

Mr Douglas explained, that it was upon account of his niece's health.

"Health !" repeated she, with a sardonic smile, "it wad mak a howlet

laugh to hear the wark that's made about young fowk's health noo-a-days. I wonder what ye're a' made o'," grasping Mary's arm in her great bony hand ; "a wheen puir feckless windle-straes—ye maun awa to England for yer healths. Set ye up ! I wonder what came o' the lasses i' my time, that but to bide hame ? And whilk o' ye, I sud like to ken, will e'er live to see ninety-sax, like me ?—Health ! he ! he ! "

" You have not asked after any of your Glenfern friends," said Mr Douglas, hoping to touch a more sympathetic chord.

" Time eneugh—will ye let me draw my breath, man ?—fowk canna say a' thing at ance. An' ye but to hae an English wife, too ?—A Scotch lass wadna ser' ye. An' yer wean, I'se warran', it's ane o' the warld's wonders—it's been unco lang o' comin'—he ! he ! "

" He has begun life under very melancholy auspices, poor fellow !" said Mr Douglas, in allusion to his father's death.

" An' wha's faut was that ?—I ne'er heard tell the like o't, to hae the bairn kirsened an' its grandfather deein' ! But fowk are neither born, nor kirsened, nor do they wad or dee as they used to do—a'thing's changed."

" You must indeed have witnessed many changes," observed Mr Douglas, rather at a loss how to utter anything of a conciliatory nature.

" Changes !—weel a wat, I sometimes wonder if it's the same warld, an' if it's my ain head that's upon my shouthers."

" But with these changes you must also have seen many improvements ?" said Mary, in a tone of diffidence.

" Impruvements !" turning sharply round upon her, "what ken ye about impruyements, bairn ? A bonnie impruvement to see tylors and sclaters leevin' whaur I mind Jukes and Yerls. An' that great glowerin' New Town

there," pointing out of her windows, "whaur I used to sit and look at bonnie green parks, and see the kye milket, and the bits o' bairnies rowin' an' tumblin', an' the lasses trampin' in their tubs;—what see I noo, but stane and lime, and stour and dirt, and idle chielis, and dunket-out madams prancing.—Impruvements, indeed!"

Here a long pinch of snuff caused a pause in the old lady's harangue; but after having duly wiped her nose with her coloured handkerchief, and shook off all the particles that might be presumed to have lodged upon her cardinal, she resumed:

"An' nae word o' ony o' your sisters gaun to get men yet? They tell me they're but coarse lasses; an' wha'll tak ill-faured, tocherless queans, when there's walth o' bonny faces an' lang purses i' the market?—he, he!" Then resuming her scrutiny of Mary,—"An' I'se warran' ye'll be lookin' for an English sweetheart too;—that'll be what's takin' ye awa to England!"

"On the contrary," said Mr Douglas, seeing Mary was too much frightened to answer for herself—"on the contrary, Mary declares she will never marry any but a true Highlander—one who wears the dirk and plaid, and has the 'second sight.' And the nuptials are to be celebrated with all the pomp of feudal times; with bagpipes and bonfires, and gatherings of clans, and roasted sheep, and barrels of whisky, and"—

"Weel a wat an' she's i' the right there," interrupted Mrs Mackshake, with more complacency than she had yet shown. "They may ca' them what they like, but there's nae waddin's noo. Wha's the better o' them but innkeepers and chaise-drivers? I wadna count mysel married i' the hidlin's way they gang aboot it noo."

Mr Douglas, who was now rather tired of the old lady's reminiscences, availed himself of the opportunity of a fresh pinch to rise and take leave.

"Ou, what's takin' ye awa, Archie, in sic a hurry? Sit doon there," laying her hand upon his arm, "an' rest ye, and tak a glass o' wine; or maybe," turning to Mary, "ye wad rather hae a drap broth to warm ye. What gars ye look sae blaue, my bairn? I'm sure it's no cauld; but ye're just like the lave; ye gang a' skiltin' about the streets half-naked, an' then ye maun sit and birse yersels afore the fire at hame."

The wine being drunk, and the cookies discussed, Mr Douglas made another attempt to withdraw, but in vain.

"Canna ye sit still a wee, man, an' let me speir after my auld freens at Glenfern? Hoo's Grizzy, an' Jacky, an' Nicky?—aye working awa at the pills and the drogs?—he, he! I ne'er swallowed a pill, nor gaed a doit for drogs, a' my days, an' see an ony of them'll run a race wi' me when they're naur five score."

Mr Douglas here paid her some compliments upon her appearance, which were pretty well received; and added that he was the bearer of a letter from his aunt Grizzy, which he would send along with a roebuck and a brace of moor game.

"Gin your roebuck's nae better than your last, atweel it's no worth the sending,—puir fushionless dirt, no worth the chewing; weel a wat, I begrudged my teeth on't. Your muirfowl was no that ill, but they're no worth the carrying; they're dang cheap i' the market e'noo, so it's nae great compliment. Gin ye had brought me a leg o' good mutton, or a caller sawmont, there would hae been some sense in't; but ye're ane o' the fowk that'll ne'er harry yoursel wi' your presents; it's but the pickle poother they cost you, an' I'se warrant ye're thinking mair o' your ain diversion than o' my stamack when ye're at the shooting o' them, puir beasts."

Mr Douglas had borne the various

indignities levelled against himself and his family with a philosophy that had no parallel in his life before ; but to this attack upon his game he was not proof. His colour rose, his eyes flashed fire, and something resembling an oath burst from his lips, as he strode indignantly towards the door.

His friend, however, was too nimble for him. She stepped before him, and breaking into a discordant laugh, as she patted him on the back,—

“ So, I see ye’re just the auld man, Archie,—aye ready to tak the strumps, an ye dinna get a’tning yer ain way. Mony a time I had to fleech ye oot o’ the dorts when ye was a callant. Div ye mind hoo ye was affronted because I set ye doon to a cauld pigeon pie an’ a tanker o’ tippenny, ae night to yer four-hours, afore some leddies ? he, he, he ! Weel a wat, your wife maun hae her ain adoos to manage ye, for ye’re a cumstarie chield, Archie.”

Mr Douglas still looked as if he was irresolute whether to laugh or be angry.

“ Come, come, sit ye doon there till I speak to this bairn,” said she, as she

pulled Mary into an adjoining bed-chamber, which wore the same aspect of chilly neatness as the one they had quitted. Then pulling a large bunch of keys from her pocket, she opened a drawer, out of which she took a pair of diamond ear-rings.

“ Hae, bairn,” said she, as she stuffed them into Mary’s hand ; “ they belanged to your faither’s grandmother. She was a good woman, an’ had four and twenty sons and dochters, an’ I wuss ye nae waur fortin than just to hae as mony. But mind ye,” shaking her bony finger, “ they maun a’ be Scots. Gin I thocht ye wad marry ony pock-puddin’, fient hait wad ye gotten frae me. Noo, haud yer tongue, and dinna deave me wi’ thanks,” almost pushing her into the parlour again ; “ and sin’ ye’re gaun awa the morn, I’ll see nae mair o’ ye e’noo—so fare ye weel. But, Archie, ye maun come an’ tak your breakfast wi’ me. I hae muckle to say to you ;—but ye maunna be sae hard upon my baps as ye used to be,” with a facetious grin to her mollified favourite, as they shook hands and parted.—“ *Marriage : a Novel.*”

THE FAITHLESS NURSE :

A LEGENDARY TALE OF THE GREAT REBELLION.

MOST of our readers who are citizens of “our own romantic town,” are familiarly acquainted with the valley which, winding among the Pentland Hills, forms the path by which the waters of Glencorse seek their way to those of the more celebrated Esk. It has long been the haunt of those “pilgrims of his genius” who loved to see with their own eyes the sacred scene chosen by the Pastoral Poet of Scotland for the display of lowly loves and rustic

beauty ; and it has now—alas the day !—acquired attractions for spirits of a far different sort ; and who can see without a sigh the triumphs of art domineering over and insulting the sweetest charms of nature ? It is not, however, to visit the stupendous and unseemly barrier which now chains up the gentle waters of the burn, nor even to seek the summer-breathing spot where Patie sung and Roger sighed, that we now request the attendance of our readers ; but

simply to point out to their attention a party of three individuals, who, on a still September evening, in the memorable year 1644, might have been seen slowly riding up the glen.

Two of the party were entitled in courtesy to be termed fair; but of these twain, one would have been acknowledged lovely by the most uncourteous boor that ever breathed. She had hardly reached the earliest years of womanhood, 'tis true, and the peachy bloom that mantled o'er her cheek showed as yet only the dawn of future loveliness; but her fair brow, on which, contrary to the fashion—we had almost said *taste*—of the times, her auburn locks danced gracefully; the laughing lustre of her dark-blue eye, and the stinging sweetness of her pouting lip, aided by an expression of indomitable gentleness of heart and kindness of manner, lent a witchery to her countenance which few could gaze upon unmoved.

The other female had thrice the years of Lady Lilias Hay; but they had not brought her one tithe of that maiden's beauty, and what little God had given her, she had, long ere the day we saw her first, destroyed, by screwing her features into an unvarying cast of prim solemnity, which, had she practised it, would have blighted the cheek of Venus herself.

The "squire of dames" who accompanied the pair we have described was also young, his chin as yet being guiltless of a hair. But there was a firmness in his look, a dark something in his eye, that bespoke his courage superior to his years; and a scar that trenched his open brow showed that he had arrived at the daring, if not the wisdom of manhood.

On the present occasion, however, it was not a feeling of recklessness which characterised the demeanour of the youth. He was thoughtful and abstracted, riding silently by the side

(10)

of the maiden, who more than once attempted to dispel the gloom which hung over the gallant. It gave way, indeed, to the influence of her gentle voice; but it was for a moment only, and the downcast eye and contracted brow ever and anon returned when the accents of her voice had ceased.

"Nay, prithee, cousin Maurice, doff the visor of thy melancholy, and let us behold thy merry heart unmasked. I could stake my little jennet here to Elspeth's favourite "baudrons," that if Montrose should meet thee in this moody temperament, he will rather promote thee to a halter as a spy from the Committee of Estates, than to honourable command befitting one who has bled beneath the eye, and been knighted by the honour-giving hand of his royal master! Do laugh with me a little."

"Why, my dearest Lilias, you seem in higher spirits to-day than is usual with you. Cannot the surety of our parting to-morrow, and the uncertainty of our ever meeting again, throw even a passing cloud over your gaiety?"

"Modestly put, my valiant cousin. I am well reminded of my unbecoming conduct. It must, of course, be night with me when you, bright sun of my happiness, shall have withdrawn your beams from me."

"Nay, banter me not, sweet Lily. Have you never known an hour when the sweetest sights were irksome to the eye, and the softest strains of music fell harshly on the ear?"

"Pshaw! if you will neither smile nor talk, of what use are you by a lady's side? What say you to a race? Yonder stands the kirk of Saint Catherine. Will you try your roan that length? An you ride not so fast now as you did from Cromwell at Longmarston Moor, I shall beat you. *Via!*"

And so saying, the light-hearted girl gave rein to her snowy palfrey, and flew up the glen toward the edifice she

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had mentioned, at a speed which Maurice Ogilvy had some difficulty in equalling, and which prevented him from overtaking her until she had reached the gate.

All who have visited—and who has not?—Roslin's “proud chapelle,” are familiar with the legend of Sir William St Clair, and his venturesome boast to the Bruce, that he would find, on peril of his head, a dog that would bring down the deer ere it could cross Glen-corse burn;—how the trusty hound did redeem his own credit and his master's life, by seizing the quarry in the very middle of the stream;—and how, in gratitude to the gentle saint by whose intercession this mighty feat was accomplished, he built a church on the bank of the stream, and dedicated it to Saint Catherine of the Howe. This virgin martyr was unfortunately no more successful than her sister saints in protecting her mansions from the desolating zeal of the earlier reformers. The church was destroyed by a fanatical mob, and nothing now remains to record the kindness of Catherine, and the gratitude of the “high Saint Clair,” but a few uneven grassy heaps of deeper green than the surrounding verdure, and the name of the neighbouring farm town, which is yet called Kirkton. At the time we are at present writing of, however, the roofless walls of the building, though gray with the ruin of a hundred years, were still almost entire, and the cemetery then and long after continued to be used by the neighbouring peasantry.

When Maurice reached the church, he found that the Lady Lilius had dismounted. He too alighted, and sought her in the interior. She was seated on a fallen stone, and the deep melancholy which now shadowed her fair countenance was more in unison with the sombre aspect of the place and of the hour, than he had expected to find it. She arose at his approach, and addressed him.

“You have something to tell me,

Maurice, and you wished to do it alone. We have now an opportunity. What has befallen us?”

“Nay, fair Lily, why should you think so? Is not the thought that tomorrow we must part of itself sufficient to dull my spirit and sadden my countenance?”

“Pshaw! trifle not with me now. Your face has no secrets for one who has conned its ill-favoured features so frequently as I have done. Out with your secret! Elspeth will be with us forthwith.”

Maurice seemed for some moments undecided how he should act, but at length, with a look of no little embarrassment, replied,—

“Sweet Lilius, you shall be obeyed. You can only laugh at me; and thanks to your merry heart, that is a daily pastime of yours.”

“Nay, nay—say on; I will be as grave as Argyle.”

“Know then, that while I waited for you and Elspeth at the bottom of the glen, a remarkable thing befell me. I had alighted, and while Rupert was trying to pick a scanty meal among the bent, I flung myself on the ground, and endeavoured to beguile the time by thinking sometimes of you, and sometimes of King Charles.”

“How! sir cousin, I am not always the companion of your reveries, it seems, then? Heigho! to think what a change a single day's matrimony has accomplished!”

“Ungenerous Lilius,” said Maurice, taking her hand, “listen to me. Lifting my head accidentally, I was surprised to perceive a man and woman walking away at some distance from me. The more attentively I looked at these individuals, the more uneasy I became, until my terror was completed by the figures slowly turning round and presenting to me the identical features of you, dear Lilius, and myself.”

“Maurice, Maurice! you amaze me!”

"Though fully aware of the unearthly nature of these appearances, I could not resist the desire I felt of following them. I did so, tracing their silent steps up the glen, until I saw them enter the churchyard without. I hastened after, but when I too entered the cemetery, the figures had disappeared!"

The lady's cheek grew pale as she listened to this narration, for in those days the belief in such prognostications was universal; and the time of day when Maurice had seen the wraiths, their retiring motion, and the fatal spot to which he had traced them, were all indicative of fast approaching doom. She clung around her husband's neck for a few moments in silence, until the deep-seated conviction of safety while with him, which forms so striking a characteristic of feminine affection, revived her spirits; and though the tear still hung on her silken eyelash as she looked up in his face, there was a languid smile on her cheek as she said,—

"Beshrew you, Maurice, for frightening me so deeply on my wedding-day! Could you find no other time than this to see bogles?"

"Well said, love," answered Maurice, who felt no little alarm at seeing the effect which his story had produced on his wife: "'twas doubtless a mere delusion."

"Even should it prove true," replied Lilius, "we shall at least die together; and there is a tranquillising influence in that thought, Maurice, which would go far to make even death agreeable."

"Let us leave this place," said Maurice, after the emotion which so bewitching a confusion excited had in some measure subsided; "I fear Elspeth will miss us."

"What then?"

"You know that I have ever distrusted that woman. She and I are as different from each other as day from darkness. She is a staunch Covenanter—I a graceless Cavalier. She rails at

love-locks, love-songs, and love-passages—I adore them all. She prays for MacCallummore, and would fain see his bonnet nod above the crown of King Charles, and the caps of his merry men;—I would rather see his head frowning on the Netherbow Port. While she opposed my suit to you, I only hated her; now that she connives at it—shall I confess it to you?—I fear her."

"Nay, now you are unjust. While in the lawful exercise of woman's just prerogative,—coquetry,—I seemed to balance the contending claims of Sir Mungo Campbell and yourself for this poor hand, Elspeth doubtlessly favoured the cause of her kinsman (all Campbell's being of course cousins); but our sovereign will once unequivocally declared, she became all submission, and has not even attempted to impugn the decision which we, somewhat foolishly perhaps, have pronounced in your favour. Besides, Maurice," continued Lilius, leaving off the mock-heroic tone in which she had hitherto spoken for one more akin to natural feeling, "Elspeth Campbell was my nurse, has a mother's affection for me, and therefore would not, I am confident, engage in any scheme inimical to my happiness."

"Still she is a Covenanter, and a Campbell," replied Maurice, "and as such, her dearest wish, even for your own sake, must be to see you the wife of him who is both the one and the other."

"Well," rejoined Lilius, colouring highly as she spoke, "that at least you have put out of her power: and yet I regret that I trusted her not in that matter. It was a secret for a woman, and a nursing mother."

"Fear not, she shall know in time. I know, I feel it is unmanly, the dread I entertain; but I cannot quell it. I wish we had not agreed to make this Logan House the trysting-place of my gallant friends: my father's dwelling had been the safer place."

"Yes ; and so have set my worthy guardian, Gillespie Grumach, and his obsequious friend Sir Mungo, on our track. Come, come, your alarm is unbecoming. At dawn we leave Logan House. The madcap disguise which you have prevailed on me to adopt will prevent any recognition till you have consigned me to my noble kinswoman of Huntly ; and you—but I wrong you—fear not for yourself."

"Kindly spoken, my love,—would to Heaven you indeed were in Strathbogie, and I among the gallant Grahams! But here comes Elspeth, looking as demure as if she were afraid that the idolatrous sacrifice of the mass, like the leprosy of old, might still stick to those time-worn walls, and infect her godly heart. Let us go."

Lilias looked earnestly on the countenance of her nurse as they met ; for though she had not acknowledged so much to Maurice, her heart had misgiven her as she listened to his discourse. Whether it might proceed from the melancholy truth, that suspicion once excited against an individual cannot be entirely quieted by any innocence whatever, or whether the countenance of Elspeth really afforded ground for the doubt of her mistress, we are unable to determine, but certainly the latter imagined at least that she could detect alarm, solicitude, and fear, lurking amid the apparent placidity of her nurse's features."

Nothing was said, however ; and the party, remounting their horses, shortly afterwards arrived at their destination for the night, namely, the Peel or Tower of Logan House. This edifice, which crowns the summit of a small knoll or brae on the northern side of Glencorse water, was one of the many places built for the safety of the population against any sudden but short-lived attack, and, from the walls, which are still left, must have been of considerable strength. It was, at the time we speak

of, entire, and consisted of two storeys ; the lower being devoted to the accommodation of the servants of the house, and that of the family bestial, while the upper was divided into the few apartments then thought sufficient for the accommodation of the gentles.

As they rode into the courtyard, Maurice was struck by the want of attendance which the place betrayed. At that day the laudable customs of the "queen's old courtier" had not entirely gone into desuetude, and every holding, however small, was filled with a number of retainers, that in the present day would be deemed excessive. At Logan House, however, things were very different. A stripling—half-man, half-boy—seemed the only representative of male vassalage, and the woman-servants, though more numerous, did not amount to anything near the average number which in those days divided amongst themselves, with commendable chariness, the duties of a household.

The faggots, however, blazed cheerfully in the upper apartment, and food and wine having been prepared in abundance, Maurice for a moment forgot his suspicions, and Lilias regained her sprightliness. They conversed gaily together of days gone by, and of courts and masques and pageants which they had seen, to the evident discomfort of Elspeth, who not only thought her presence becoming in her character of nurse, but somewhat necessary in the existing condition, as she imagined, of the youthful pair. Maurice soon saw her uneasiness, and wickedly resolved to make it a means of pastime to himself and Lilias.

"Do you recollect, sweet Lily, when the good King Charles kissed your cheek in Holyroodhouse, and vowed, on a king's word, to find a husband for you?"

"I do ; and how a malapert page sounded in my ear that he would save his Majesty the trouble."

"And have I not kept my word—ha,

lady mine? The great Argyle and all his men will hardly, I think, undo the links that bind us to each other;” and inspired, as it seemed, by the pleasant thought, the youth took the lady’s hand in his, and pressed it warmly and frequently to his lips.

Elspeth looked on in amazement at the familiarity of intercourse in which the lady indulged her cousin, and which was equally repugnant to her natural and acquired feelings on the subject.

“Pshaw! you foolish man, desist!” cried Lilius, blushing and laughing at the same time, when Maurice attempted to substitute her rosy lips for the hand he had been so fervently kissing. “What will Elspeth think?”

“Think, Lady Lilius!” said Elspeth bitterly; “think! I cannot think; but I can feel for the impropriety—the sinful levity—into which, for the first time, I see my mistress fallen.”

The fair neck of Lilius crimsoned as she listened to the taunt. For a moment a frown gathered on her brow, before which the nurse’s countenance fell; but it died away in a moment, and, with a beseeching smile, which lay nestled among rosy blushes, she stretched out her hand and said,—

“Forgive me, Elspeth, we are married!”

This brief annunciation had a striking effect on the individual to whom it was addressed. She clasped together her withered hands, and continued for a few moments gazing wildly in the faces of the startled pair, seemingly anxious to discover there some contradiction of what she had just heard; and then uttering a loud long shriek, dashed her face against the wooden board, and groaned audibly.

The terrified Lilius tried to raise the old woman’s head from the table, but she for some time resisted the kindly effort. At length, raising her pale and now haggard features to those of the lady, she exclaimed,—

“Unsay, child of my affection, the dreadful tidings you have told;—tell me not that I have murdered the daughter of my mistress. Often when the *taish* was on me have I seen the dirk in your bosom. Little did I dream that my own hand should guide it there. Oh! say you are not married.”

Lilius, who knew the violent temper of her nurse, and imagined her present ravings proceeded from offended pride at not having been made privy to the marriage, now attempted to soothe her feelings.

“Nay, my dear Elspeth, take not on so; you know Sir Maurice and I have long loved each other; to-morrow morning he rides to join Montrose, who has conquered for the king at Tippermuir. I tremble to be left behind, and have therefore resolved to accompany him; in these circumstances, was it not fitting that he should have a husband’s title to protect me? ’Twas but this morning we were wedded; and I ever meant to tell you here.”

“Here, said you?” replied the old woman, shuddering. “But I am guiltless. You were ordained to be the destruction of each other before the world was. James Graham will look long and wearily for your coming, I fear. Hush! the Campbells are about the house; and *he* is coming to seek you here.”

“Who?—Sir Mungo Campbell?” said Lilius and her husband, in the same breath.

“Even he,” replied Elspeth; “he brings the warrant of the Estates to apprehend Sir Maurice, and has orders from the Marquis of Argyle to secure your own person.”

“Treacherous, infamous wretch!”—“Cruel, unkind Elspeth!” burst again simultaneously from the lips of Maurice and his bride.

“Upbraid me not, Lady Lilius: alas! what must fall will fall. Oh,

that you had trusted me. I fondly hoped that Sir Mungo Campbell might yet be your husband, and that I should see you the proud and happy mistress of Castle Lorn ; but married !—he will water this floor with our blood !”

And again the wretched old woman, overcome with remorse and terror, shrieked aloud. Then, as if stung by some instantaneous and overpowering feeling, she hastily quitted the apartment. The betrayed and devoted pair gazed for a few minutes at each other in silent sadness. There was more of grief than terror in these mournful looks ; for it was for the calamity of the other that each heart bled. At length the lady sunk, weeping, into his arms.

“Oh, Maurice, Maurice, bitterly are our fears fulfilled ! We are lost ! There is no escape from the blood-hounds who have beset us.”

“Nay, nay, my love,” replied the knight, feigning the tranquillity he did not feel ; “think not so. I must have heard the arrival of the party, had we been yet surrounded. There still is time to escape from the net prepared for us. Once on horseback, between the darkness of the night, and the wild nature of these hills, we may manage to escape.”

Ere Lilius could make answer to this cheering discourse, Elspeth entered the apartment.

“Haste !” she exclaimed in an emphatic whisper, “a moment yet is left. Sir Mungo has not arrived. Leave, oh leave, this fearful place !” and she wrung her hands impatiently.

The lovers lost no time in obeying this invitation. Two large riding-cloaks were supplied by Elspeth, in order to conceal their forms, if they should unhappily be met by Sir Mungo ; while, still more to defeat detection, it was agreed that Lilius should mount the nurse’s pony.

“And you, Elspeth,” said the lady,

with a kind-heartedness which no personal danger could destroy, “what shall become of you ?”

“Fear not for me,” replied Elspeth chokingly ; “I fear nothing—fly !”

Maurice now led his lady to the open plain, and here saw, with sorrow, that the moon, which shone dazzlingly bright, would destroy almost every hope of escaping the recognition of Sir Mungo Campbell, should that individual meet them ; and this was, alas ! too soon to happen. They had only turned the angle of the building, with the intention of taking the hillward path, when they saw a band of armed men, at the head of whom stood one whom hatred and fear at once enabled both to pronounce the man they sought to shun.

“Who comes there ?” cried Sir Mungo, harshly.

“Friends to King Charles,” replied Maurice, undauntedly.

“That may well be,” replied Campbell, “and yet deep foes to Scotland. Sir Maurice Ogilvy, I arrest thee of high treason !”

“Win me, and wear me, Round-head !” cried the knight ; and, throwing off the cloak which cumbered him, he drew his sword with one hand, while with the other he plucked Lilius from her seat, and placed her before him. Then giving the rowel to his horse, he dashed among the astonished Highlanders, who either fell before, or yielded a passage to the gallant steed.

A wild yell arose amid the stillness of the night, as the Campbells perceived the rapid pace at which Maurice rode, and which, if continued for a few minutes, must soon place him beyond the chance of capture, and matchlocks and pistols were employed in vain to interrupt his career. But, alas ! Heaven had decreed the triumph of the guilty. Urged to his utmost speed, Rupert would soon have saved his master, and his yet more precious

load, when, his foot striking against a piece of earthfast rock, he stumbled—made a futile effort to recover himself—and at last fell on his side. Sir Maurice instantly sprung to his feet, but Lilius lay apparently lifeless on the turf. He kneeled down, and raised her in his arms, but she replied not to his eager questionings. He could feel no pulse, to tell him of returning life; and to his despair, he perceived the blood flowing profusely from her white brow.

"She is gone!" cried he, bitterly. "Now, Campbell, for thy heart;" and as he spoke, he lifted his weapon from the grass. He had hardly regained it, when he was surrounded by the Highlanders.

"Yield thee, Sir Maurice, or thou diest."

"Never to one of thy detested clan will Maurice Ogilvy give up his sword. Send back your murderers, Campbell, and let us settle here our long arrear of hatred."

"Once more I bid thee yield."

"Again do I defy thee."

"Thy blood be on thy head then. Smite the braggart to the dust."

The word was barely uttered when the upraised arm of one who stood behind the youth buried a dirk in his bosom. He reeled to the earth, tried with dimming eye to scan the features of Lilius as she lay still prostrate on the ground, and then casting his eyes upwards, murmured out, "Bear witness, Heaven, I die true to love, and faithful to the king!" A moment more, and he was silent.

Campbell next proceeded to raise the body of Lilius from the ground. It seemed as if her deep-rooted aversion to this person was so vital as even to govern her while in a state of insensibility; for no sooner had his fingers

touched her waist, than she started from the ground, and, drawing her hands across her eyes, gazed wildly around. A moment sufficed to show her the cureless ruin which had befallen her hopes and happiness, and, bursting from the grasp of her hated suitor, and exclaiming in a voice hoarse in agony, "Stand off, monster! I am his wife!" she threw herself with reckless violence on the prostrate corpse. Even the heart of Campbell was touched by her extreme misery, and some minutes elapsed ere he could give directions for her removal. That was now needless. In her frantic despair, poor Lilius regarded death as an enviable blessing; the dagger of Maurice afforded her the ready means of escaping at once from all her worldly woe, and her cruel captors only raised her to discover that her heart's blood was now mingling on the same turf with that of him who had alone possessed her living love.

On the following morning, the wandering shepherds of the neighbourhood perceived a new-made grave in the churchyard of Saint Catherine, and a wretched being in female attire seated beside it. Hers was a grief "too deep for tears"—a sorrow too mighty for mortal alleviation. She spoke to no one, replied to no one, but continued, with her head resting on her lap, to spend the livelong day by the side of the unfortunates whom her well-meant treachery had stretched so untimely there. As the winter advanced, she grew weaker and weaker, but still she abstained not from her daily vigil. Even when, from debility, she was unable to walk, she prevailed on some one to carry her to the lonely cemetery; and her dying words to her pitying neighbours were—"Bury me at the feet of Lady Lilius—remember, at the feet."—*Edinburgh Literary Gazette.*

TRADITIONS OF THE CELEBRATED MAJOR WEIR.

BY ROBERT CHAMBERS, LL.D.

IN one of the most ancient streets of Edinburgh, called the West Bow, stood the house formerly inhabited by Major Weir, whose name is scarcely more conspicuous in the Criminal Records of Scotland, than it is notorious in the mouth of popular tradition. The awful tenement was situated in a small court at the back of the main street, accessible by a narrow entry leading off to the east, about fifty yards from the top of the Bow. It was a sepulchral-looking fabric, with a peculiarly dejected and dismal aspect, as if it were conscious of the bad character which it bore among the neighbouring houses.

It is now about one hundred and fifty years since Major Weir, an old soldier of the civil war, and the bearer of some command in the City Guard of Edinburgh, closed a most puritanical life, by confessing himself a sorcerer, and being burnt accordingly at the stake. The scandal in which this involved the Calvinistic party seems to have been met, on their part, by an endeavour to throw the whole blame upon the shoulders of Satan ; and this conclusion, which was almost justified by the mystery and singularity of the case, has had the effect of connecting the criminal's name inalienably with the demonology of Scotland.

Sundry strange reminiscences of Major Weir and his house are preserved among the old people of Edinburgh, and especially by the venerable gossips of the West Bow. It is said he derived that singular gift of prayer by which he surprised all his acquaintance, and procured so sanctimonious a reputation, from his walking-cane ! This implement, it appears, the Evil One, from whom he procured it, had endowed with the

most wonderful properties and powers. It not only inspired him with prayer, so long as he held it in his hand, but it acted in the capacity of a Mercury, in so far as it could go an errand, or run a message. Many was the time it went out to the neighbouring shops for supplies of snuff to its master ! And as the fact was well known, the shopkeepers of the Bow were not startled at the appearance of so strange a customer. Moreover, it often "answered the door," when people came to call upon the Major, and it had not unfrequently been seen running along before him, in the capacity of link-boy, as he walked down the Lawnmarket. Of course, when the Major was burnt, his wooden lieutenant and valet was carefully burnt with him, though it does not appear in the Justiciary Records that it was included in the indictment, or that Lord Dirleton subjected it, in common with its master, to the ceremony of a sentence.

It is also said that the spot on which the Major was burnt,—namely, the south-east corner of the esplanade on the Castle-Hill,—continued ever after scathed and incapable of vegetation. But we must beg to suggest the possibility of this want of verdure being occasioned by the circumstance of the esplanade being a hard gravel-walk. We are very unwilling to find scientific reasons for last-century miracles,—to withdraw the veil from beautiful deceptions,—or to dispel the halo which fancy may have thrown around the incidents of a former day. But a regard for truth obliges us to acknowledge, that the same miracle, attributed to the burning-place of Wishart, at St Andrews, may be accounted for in a similar way, the spot

being now occupied by what the people thereabouts denominate, in somewhat homely phrase, "a mussel midden."

For upwards of a century after Major Weir's death, he continued to be the bugbear of the Bow, and his house remained uninhabited. His apparition was frequently seen at night flitting, like a black and silent shadow, about the purlieus of that singular street. His house, though known to be deserted by everything human, was sometimes observed at midnight to be full of lights, and heard to emit strange sounds, as of dancing, howling, and, what is strangest of all, spinning. It was believed, too, that every night, when the clock of St Giles tolled twelve, one of the windows sprung open, and the ghost of a tall woman in white, supposed to be the Major's equally terrible sister, came forward, and bent her long figure thrice over the window, her face every time touching the wall about three feet down, and then retired, closing the window after her with an audible clang.

Some people had occasionally seen the Major issue from the low "close," at the same hour, mounted on a black horse without a head, and gallop off in a whirlwind of flame. Nay, sometimes the whole of the inhabitants of the Bow together were roused from their sleep at an early hour in the morning, by the sound as of a coach-and-six, first rattling up the Lawnmarket, and then thundering down the Bow, stopping at the head of the terrible "close" for a few minutes, and then rattling and thundering back again,—being neither more nor less than Satan come in one of his best equipages, to take home to his abode the ghosts of the Major and his sister, after they had spent a night's leave of absence in their terrestrial dwelling. In support of these beliefs, circumstances, of course, were not wanting. One or two venerable men of the Bow, who had, perhaps, on the night of the 7th September 1736, popped their night-capped heads out of

their windows, and seen Captain Porteous hurried down their street to execution, were pointed out by children as having actually witnessed some of the dreadful doings alluded to. One worthy, in particular, declared he had often seen coaches parading up and down the Bow at midnight, drawn by six black horses without heads, and driven by a coachman of the most hideous appearance, whose flaming eyes, placed at an immense distance from each other in his forehead, as they gleamed through the darkness, resembled nothing so much as the night-lamps of a modern vehicle.

About forty years ago, when the shades of superstition began universally to give way in Scotland, Major Weir's house came to be regarded with less terror by the neighbours, and an attempt was made by the proprietor to find a person who would be bold enough to inhabit it. Such a person was procured in William Patullo, a poor man of dissipated habits, who, having been at one time a soldier and a traveller, had come to disregard in a great measure the superstitions of his native country, and was now glad to possess a house upon the low terms offered by the landlord, at whatever risk. Upon it being known in the town that Major Weir's house was about to be re-inhabited, a great deal of curiosity was felt by people of all ranks as to the result of the experiment; for there was scarcely a native of the city who had not felt since his boyhood an intense interest in all that concerned that awful fabric, and yet remembered the numerous terrible stories which he had heard told respecting it. Even before entering upon his hazardous undertaking, William Patullo was looked upon with a flattering sort of interest—an interest similar to that which we feel respecting a culprit under sentence of death, a man about to be married, or a regiment on the march to active conflict. It w^e

the hope of many that he would be the means of retrieving a valuable possession from the dominion of darkness. But Satan soon let them know that he does not ever tamely relinquish the outposts of his kingdom.

On the very first evening after Patullo and his spouse had taken up their abode in the house, a circumstance took place which effectually deterred them and all others from ever again inhabiting it. About one in the morning, as the worthy couple were lying awake in their bed, not unconscious of a considerable degree of fear, a dim, uncertain light proceeding from the gathered embers of their fire, and all being silent around them, they suddenly saw a form like that of a calf, but without the head, come through the lower panel of the door and enter the room. A spectre more horrible, or more spectre-like conduct, could scarcely have been conceived. The phantom immediately came forward to the bed; and setting its fore-feet upon the stock, looked steadfastly in all its awful headlessness at the unfortunate pair, who were of course almost ready to die with fright. When it had contemplated them thus for a few minutes, to their great relief it at length took away its intolerable person, and slowly retiring, gradually vanished from their sight. As might be expected, they deserted the house next morning; and from that time forward, no other attempt was ever made to embank this part of the world of light from the aggressions of the world of darkness.

In the course of our experience we have met with many houses in "Auld Reekie" which have the credit of being haunted. There is one at this day [1829] in Buchanan's Court, Lawnmarket, in the same "land" in which the celebrated editor of the *Edinburgh Review* first saw the light. It is a flat, and has been shut up from time immemorial. The story goes, that one

night, as preparations were making for a supper party, something occurred which obliged the family, as well as all the assembled guests, to retire with precipitation, and lock up the house. From that night to this it has never once been opened, nor was any of the furniture withdrawn;—the very goose which was undergoing the process of being roasted at the time of the dreadful occurrence is still at the fire! No one knows to whom the house belongs; no one ever inquires after it; no one living ever saw the inside of it;—it is a condemned house! There is something peculiarly dreadful about a house under these circumstances. What sights of horror might present themselves if it were entered! Satan is the *ultimus hæres* of all such unclaimed property.

Besides the numberless old houses in Edinburgh that are haunted, there are many endowed with the simple credit of having been the scenes of murders and suicides. Some we have met with, containing rooms which had particular names commemorative of such events, and these names, handed down as they had been from one generation to another, usually suggested the remembrance of some dignified Scottish families, probably the former tenants of the houses.

The closed house in Mary King's Close (behind the Royal Exchange) is believed by some to have met with that fate for a very fearful reason. The inhabitants at a very remote period were, it is said, compelled to abandon it by the supernatural appearance which took place in it, on the very first night after they had made it their residence. At midnight, as the goodman was sitting with his wife by the fire, reading his Bible, and intending immediately to go to bed, a strange dimness which suddenly fell upon the light caused him to raise his eyes from the book. He looked at the candle, and saw it was burning blue. Terror took possession

of his frame. He turned away his eyes from the ghastly object ; but the cure was worse than the disease. Directly before him, and apparently not two yards off, he saw the head as of a dead person looking him straight in the face. There was nothing but a head, though that seemed to occupy the precise situation in regard to the floor which it might have done had it been supported by a body of the ordinary stature. The man and his wife fainted with terror. On awaking, darkness pervaded the

room. Presently the door opened, and in came a hand holding a candle. This advanced and stood—that is, the body supposed to be attached to the hand stood—beside the table, whilst the terrified pair saw two or three couples of feet skip along the floor, as if dancing. The scene lasted a short time, but vanished quite away upon the man gathering strength to invoke the protection of Heaven. The house was of course abandoned, and remained ever afterwards shut up.

THE WINDY YULE.

BY JOHN GALT.

IT was in the course of the winter after the decease of Bailie M'Lucre, that the great loss of lives took place, which, everybody agreed, was one of the most calamitous things that had for many a year befallen the town.

Three or four vessels were coming with cargoes of grain from Ireland ; another from the Baltic with Norway deals ; and a third from Bristol, where she had been on a charter for some Greenock merchants.

It happened that, for a time, there had been contrary winds, against which no vessel could enter the port, and the ships whereof I have been speaking were all lying together at anchor in the bay, waiting a change of weather. These five vessels were owned among ourselves, and their crews consisted of fathers and sons belonging to the place, so that, both by reason of interest and affection, a more than ordinary concern was felt for them ; for the sea was so rough, that no boat could live in it to go near them, and we had our fears that the men on board would be very ill off. Nothing, however, occurred but

this natural anxiety, till the Saturday, which was Yule. In the morning the weather was blasty and sleety, waxing more and more tempestuous till about midday, when the wind checked suddenly round from the nor'-east to the sou'-west, and blew a gale as if the prince of the powers of the air was doing his utmost to work mischief. The rain blattered, the windows clattered, the shop-shutters flapped, pigs from the lum-heads came rattling down like thunder claps, and the skies were dismal both with cloud and carry. Yet, for all that, there was in the streets a stir and a busy visitation between neighbours, and every one went to their high windows, to look at the five poor barks that were warsling against the strong arm of the elements of the storm and the ocean.

Still the lift gloomed, and the wind roared, and it was as doleful a sight as ever was seen in any town afflicted with calamity to see the sailors' wives, with their red cloaks about their heads, followed by their hirpling and disconsolate bairns, going one after another to the kirkyard, to look at the vessels where

their helpless bread-winners were battling with the tempest. My heart was really sorrowful, and full of a sore anxiety to think of what might happen to the town, whereof so many were in peril, and to whom no human magistracy could extend the arm of protection. Seeing no abatement of the wrath of heaven, that howled and roared around us, I put on my big-coat, and taking my staff in my hand, having tied down my hat with a silk handkerchief, towards gloaming I walked likewise to the kirkyard, where I beheld such an assemblage of sorrow, as few men in a public situation have ever been put to the trial to witness.

In the lee of the kirk many hundreds of the town were gathered together; but there was no discourse among them. The major part were sailors' wives and weans, and at every new thud of the blast, a sob arose, and the mothers drew their bairns closer in about them, as if they saw the visible hand of a foe raised to smite them. Apart from the multitude, I observed three or four young lasses standing behind the Whinnyhill family's tomb, and I jaloused that they had joes in the ships; for they often looked to the bay, with long necks and sad faces, from behind the monument. A widow woman, one old Mary Weery, that was a lameter, and dependent on her son, who was on board the *Louping Meg* (as the Lovely Peggy was nicknamed at the shore), stood by herself, and every now and then wrung her hands, crying, with a woeful voice, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord;" —but it was manifest to all that her faith was fainting within her. But of all the piteous objects there, on that doleful evening, none troubled my thoughts more than three motherless children, that belonged to the mate of one of the vessels in the jeopardy. He was an Englishman that had been settled some years in the town, where his

family had neither kith nor kin; and his wife having died about a month before, the bairns, of whom the eldest was but nine or so, were friendless enough, though both my gudewife, and other well-disposed ladies, paid them all manner of attention till their father would come home. The three poor little things, knowing that he was in one of the ships, had been often out and anxious, and they were then sitting under the lee of a headstone, near their mother's grave, chittering and creeping closer and closer at every squall. Never was such an orphan-like sight seen.

When it began to be so dark that the vessels could no longer be discerned from the churchyard, many went down to the shore, and I took the three babies home with me, and Mrs Pawkie made tea for them, and they soon began to play with our own younger children, in blithe forgetfulness of the storm. Every now and then, however, the eldest of them, when the shutters rattled and the lum-head roared, would pause in his innocent daffing, and cower in towards Mrs Pawkie, as if he was daunted and dismayed by something he knew not what.

Many a one that night walked the sounding shore in sorrow, and fires were lighted along it to a great extent; but the darkness and the noise of the raging deep, and the howling wind, never intermitted till about midnight: at which time a message was brought to me, that it might be needful to send a guard of soldiers to the beach, for that broken masts and tackle had come in, and that surely some of the barks had perished. I lost no time in obeying this suggestion, which was made to me by one of the owners of the *Louping Meg*; and to show that I sincerely sympathised with all those in affliction, I rose and dressed myself, and went down to the shore, where I directed several old boats to be drawn up by the fires, and blankets to be brought, and cordials to be prepared,

for them that might be spared with life to reach the land; and I walked the beach with the mourners till daylight.

As the day dawned, the wind began to abate in its violence, and to wear away from the sou'-west into the norit, but it was soon discovered that some of the vessels with the corn had perished ; for the first thing seen was a long fringe of tangle and grain along the line of the high-water mark, and every one strained with greedy and grieved eyes, as the daylight brightened, to discover which had suffered. But I can proceed no further with the dismal recital of that doleful morning. Let it suffice here to be known, that, through the haze, we at last saw three of the vessels lying on their beam-ends with their masts broken, and the waves riding like the furious horses of destruction over them. What had become of the other two was never known ; but it was supposed that they

had foundered at their anchors, and that all on board perished.

The day being now Sabbath, and the whole town idle, everybody in a manner was down on the beach, to help and mourn as the bodies, one after another, were cast out by the waves. Alas ! few were the better of my provident preparation, and it was a thing not to be described to see, for more than a mile along the coast, the new-made widows and fatherless bairns, mourning and weeping over the corpses of those they loved. Seventeen bodies were, before ten o'clock, carried to the desolated dwellings of their families ; and when old Thomas Pull, the betheral, went to ring the bell for public worship, such was the universal sorrow of the town, that Nanse Donsie, an idiot natural, ran up the street to stop him, crying, in the voice of pardonable desperation, "Wha, in sic a time, can praise the Lord ?"

GRIZEL COCHRANE.

CHAPTER I.

THE age which this noble woman adorned with her life and heroic actions was that gloomy one extending between the Restoration and Revolution (from 1660 to 1688), when the Scottish nation suffered under a cruel oppression, on account of their conscientious scruples respecting the existing forms of Church and State. Three insurrections, more bold than wise, marked the impatience of the Scots under this bloody rule ; but it was with the last solely that Grizel Cochrane was connected.

Sir John Cochrane of Ochiltree, the father of our heroine, was the second son of the first Earl of Dundonald, and the ancestor of the present line of that noble and ingenious family. He was a

distinguished friend of Sidney, Russell, and other illustrious men, who signalised themselves in England by their opposition to the court ; and he had so long endeavoured in vain to procure some improvement in the national affairs, that he at length began to despair of his country altogether, and formed the design of emigrating to America. Having gone to London in 1683, with a view to a colonising expedition to South Carolina, he became involved in the deliberations of the Whig party, which at that time tended towards a general insurrection in England and Scotland, for the purpose of forcing an alteration of the royal councils, and the exclusion of the Duke of York

from the throne. In furtherance of this plan, Sir John pledged himself to assist the Earl of Argyle in raising the malcontents in Scotland. This earl was, if not the acknowledged head of the party in that kingdom, at least the man of highest rank who espoused its interests.

By the treachery of some of his subordinate agents, this design was detected prematurely; and while some were unfortunately taken and executed, among whom were Sidney and Lord Russell, the rest fled from the kingdom. Of the latter number were the Earl of Argyle, Sir John Cochrane, and Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth,—the last a patriot rivalling Cochrane in talent and purity of motives, and also, like him, destined to experience the devotedness of a daughter's love. The fugitives found safety in Holland, where they remained in peace till the death of Charles the Second, in February 1685, when the Duke of York, the object politically of their greatest detestation, became king. It was then determined to invade Scotland with a small force, to embody the Highland adherents of Argyle with the west country Presbyterians, and, marching into England, to raise the people as they moved along, and not rest till they had produced the desired melioration of the State.

The expedition sailed in May, but the Government was enabled to take such precautions as, from the very first, proved a complete frustration to their designs. Argyle lingered timidly in his own country, and finally, against the advice of Cochrane and Hume, who were his chief officers, made some unfortunate movements, which ended in the entire dissolution of his army, and his own capture and death. While this well-meaning but weak nobleman committed himself to a low disguise, in the vain hope of effecting his escape, Sir John Cochrane and Sir Patrick Hume headed a body of 200 men, formed out of the relics of the army,

and bravely resolved, even with that small force, to attempt the accomplishment of their original intention—namely, a march into England. They accordingly crossed the Clyde into Renfrewshire, where they calculated on obtaining some reinforcement. The boats on this occasion being insufficient to transport the whole at once, the first party, headed by the two patriots, was obliged to contend, on the opposite bank of the river, with a large squadron of militia, while the boats returned for the remainder; after which the united force caused their opponents to retreat. The militia returned, however, in greater force, and renewed the assault at a place called Muirdykes, in the parish of Lochwinnoch. They were now commanded by Lord Ross and a Captain Clellan, and amounted to two troops, while Sir John Cochrane's men had decreased to seventy in number.

In this predicament they were called on by the royal troops to lay down their arms, and surrender themselves prisoners. But preferring the risk of death on the field to the tender mercies of a vindictive foe, they rejected the terms with disdain, and, entering a sheepfold, used its frail sod walls as a defence against the furious attack of the enemy, whom, after a keen conflict, in which every man fought hand to hand with his opponents, they at length succeeded in beating off, with the loss of their captain and some other men, while Lord Ross was wounded. Cochrane, however, soon after learned that the enemy was returning with a great reinforcement, and fearing that he could not much longer defend himself on the field, retired with his troops to a neighbouring wilderness or morass, where he dismissed them, with the request that each man would provide the best way he could for his own safety. For himself, having received two severe contusions in the body during the engagement, and being worn

out with fatigue, he sought refuge in the house of his uncle, Mr Gavin Cochrane of Craigmuir, who lived at no great distance from the place of encounter. This gentleman, however, as it unfortunately happened, had married a sister of the Captain Clellan killed in the late battle, and, filled with revenge for the death of her brother, this lady secretly informed against her guest, who was immediately seized and removed to Edinburgh, where, after being paraded through the streets, bound and bareheaded, and conducted by the common hangman, he was lodged in the Tolbooth on the 3d of July 1685, there to await his trial as a traitor. The day of trial came, and he was condemned to death, in spite of the most strenuous exertions of his aged father, the Earl of Dundonald, who, having received his title from the hands of Charles the Second, had, from motives of honour, never conspired against him.

Where is the tongue that can express all the secret and varied anguish that penetrates the yearning heart, when about to leave for ever the warm precincts of mortality, to quit the loving charities of life, and to have all the cords which bound it to existence suddenly torn asunder? Natural strength of mind may suffice to conceal much of this mortal conflict, or even to hide it altogether from the eye of the careless observer, but still it is at work within, and grapples in deadly struggle with the spirit.

Such was the state of Cochrane's mind on the night of his condemnation, when left once more to the gloomy solitude of his prison. It was not the parting stroke of death he feared, however sharp. He was a father, loving and beloved; and the thoughts of the sorrow his children were doomed to suffer on his account, wrung his heart, and burning tears, which his own fate could not have called forth, were shed for them. No friend or relative had

been permitted to see him from the time of his apprehension; but it was now signified to him, that any of his family that he desired to communicate with might be allowed to visit him. Anxious, however, to deprive his enemies of an opportunity of an accusation against his sons, he immediately conveyed to them his earnest entreaties, and indeed commands, that they should refrain from availing themselves of this leave till the night before his execution. This was a sacrifice which it required his utmost fortitude to make; and it had left him to a sense of the most desolate loneliness, insomuch that when, late in the evening, he heard his prison door unlocked, he lifted not his eyes towards it, imagining that the person who entered could only be the jailer, who was particularly repulsive in his countenance and manner. What, then, was his surprise and momentary delight, when he beheld before him his only daughter, and felt her arms entwining his neck! Yet, when he looked on her face, and saw the expression it bore of mute despairing agony, more fearful than the most frantic manifestations of misery, and marked her pale cheeks, which no longer bloomed with the tints of health and happiness, and felt the cold dampness of her brow, he thought himself wrong for having given way for an instant to the joy her presence had created, and every other sensation fled before the fear of what might be the consequence to her of this interview. He had no sooner, however, expressed his feelings on this subject, than she became sensible that, in order to palliate his misery, she must put a strong curb upon her own, and in a short time was calm enough to enter into conversation with her father upon the dismal subject of his present situation, and to deliver a message from the old earl, her grandfather, by which he was informed that an appeal had been

made from him to the king, and means taken to propitiate Father Peters, his Majesty's confessor, who, it was well known, often dictated to him in matters of State. It appeared evident, however, by the turn which their discourse presently took, that neither father nor daughter was at all sanguine in their hopes from this negotiation. The Earl of Argyle had been executed but a few days before, as had also several of his principal adherents, though men of less consequence than Sir John Cochrane ; and it was therefore improbable that he, who had been so conspicuously active in the insurrection, should be allowed to escape the punishment which it was now in their power to inflict. Besides all this, the treaty to be entered into with Father Peters would require some time to adjust, and meanwhile the arrival of the warrant for execution must every day be looked for.

Under these circumstanees, several days passed, each of which found Miss Grizel Cochrane an inmate of her father's prison for as many hours as she was permitted. During these interviews of the father and daughter, while heart clung unto heart, they reaped all the consolation which an undisguised knowledge of the piety and courage of each could bestow. Still, after such intercourse, the parting scene which they anticipated seemed more and more dreadful to think of ; and, as the daughter looked on the pale and dejected countenance of her parent, her bosom was penetrated with the sharpest pangs. The love of her father might be termed a component part of her nature. She had cherished this filial love ever since she possessed a consciousness of thought, and it was now strong and absorbing, in proportion to the danger in which he stood. Grizel Cochrane was only at that period eighteen years old ; but it is the effect of such perilous times as those in which she lived to sober the reckless spirit of youth, and make men

and women of children. She had, however, a natural strength of character, that would, on all extraordinary occasions, have displayed itself without such a tuition, and which, being now joined with what she conceived the necessity of the case, rendered her capable of a deed which has caused her history to vie with that of the most distinguished of heroines.

Ever since her father's condemnation, her daily and nightly thoughts had dwelt on the fear of her grandfather's communication with the king's confessor being rendered unavailable, for want of the time necessary for enabling the friends in London, to whom it was trusted, to make their application, and she boldly determined to execute a plan, whereby the arrival of the death warrant would be retarded. A short time, therefore, before it was expected by the council in Edinburgh, she thought it necessary, in her visit to her father, to mention that some urgent affair would prevent her from seeing him again for a few days. Alarmed at this, and penetrating her design of effecting somewhat in his favour, he warned her against attempting impossibilities.

"Nothing is impossible to a determined mind," said she ; "and fear nothing for me."

"But the inexperience of youth, my child," he replied, "may involve you in danger and in blame ; and did you but know the characters of those you must encounter, while vainly pleading for your father's life, you would fear, as I do, the sullyng of your fair fame."

"I am a Cochrane, my father!" said the heroic girl—an answer how brief, but to him how expressive ! He could say no more ; he beheld in his child, so young, so beautiful, and so self-devoted, all the virtues of her race combined, and he felt for the moment that the courage she had prayed for would be granted to carry her through the undertaking she meditated, what-

ever that might be. She felt grateful to her father that he did not urge her further; but she trembled as she turned, at her departure, to catch another look

of those loved and venerated features; for his eye appeared to be following her with a parting expression, which seemed to say it was the last fond look.

CHAPTER II.

AT that time horses were used as a mode of conveyance so much more than carriages, that almost every gentle-woman had her own steed, and Miss Cochrane, being a skilful rider, was possessed of a well-managed palfrey, on whose speed and other qualities she had been accustomed to depend. On the morning after she had bid her father farewell, long ere the inhabitants of Edinburgh were astir, she found herself many miles on the road to the Borders. She had taken care to attire herself in a manner which corresponded with the design of passing herself off for a young serving-woman journeying on a borrowed horse to the house of her mother in a distant part of the country; and by only resting at solitary cottages, where she generally found the family out at work, save perhaps an old woman or some children, she had the good fortune, on the second day after leaving Edinburgh, to reach in safety the abode of her old nurse, who lived on the English side of the Tweed, four miles beyond the town of Berwick. In this woman she knew she could place implicit confidence, and to her, therefore, revealed her secret. She was resolved, she said, to make an attempt to save her father's life, by stopping the postman, an equestrian like herself, and forcing him to deliver up his bags, in which she expected to find the fatal warrant. Singular as such a determination may appear in a delicate young woman, especially if we consider that she was aware of the arms always carried by the man to whose charge the mail was committed, it is nevertheless an undoubted fact that such was her resolve. In

pursuance of this design, she had brought with her a brace of small pistols, together with a horseman's cloak tied up in a bundle, and hung on the crutch of her saddle; and now borrowed from her nurse the attire of her foster-brother, which, as he was a slight-made lad, fitted her reasonably well.

At that period, all those appliances which at this day accelerate the progress of the traveller were unknown, and the mail from London, which now arrives in about ten hours, took eight days in reaching the Scottish capital. Miss Cochrane thus calculated on a delay of sixteen or seventeen days in the execution of her father's sentence—a space of time which she deemed amply sufficient to give a fair trial to the treaty set on foot for his liberation. She had, by means which it is unnecessary here to detail, possessed herself of the most minute information with regard to the places at which the postmen rested on their journey, one of which was a small public-house, kept by a widow woman, on the outskirts of the little town of Belford. There the man who received the bag at Durham was accustomed to arrive about six o'clock in the morning, and take a few hours' repose before proceeding farther on his journey.* In pursuance of the plan laid down by Miss Cochrane, she

* Lest it should appear at issue with probability that the postman should thus "take his ease at his inn," it may be mentioned, as a fact defying all question, that this official, at a period much later, used sometimes to dismount on a muir, near the place here mentioned, and partake of a game at quoits, or other sports which might be proceeding by the wayside.

arrived at this inn about an hour after the man had composed himself to sleep, in the hope of being able, by the exercise of her wit and dexterity, to ease him of his charge.

Having put her horse into the stable, which was a duty that devolved on the guests at this little change-house, from its mistress having no ostler, she entered the only apartment which the house afforded, and demanded refreshment.

"Sit down at the end of that table," said the old woman, "for the best I have to give you is there already; and be pleased, my bonnie man, to make as little noise as ye can, for there's ane asleep in that bed that I like ill to disturb."

Miss Cochrane promised fairly; and after attempting to eat some of the viands, which were the remains of the sleeping man's meal, she asked for some cold water.

"What!" said the old dame, as she handed it to her; "ye are a water-drinker, are ye? It's but an ill custom for a change-house."

"I am aware of that," replied her guest; "and therefore, when in a public-house, I always pay for it the price of the stronger potion, which I cannot take."

"Indeed!—well, that is but just," said the landlady; "and I think the more of you for such reasonable conduct."

"Is the well where you get this water near at hand?" said the young lady; "for if you will take the trouble to bring me some from it, as this is rather warm, it shall be considered in the lawing."

"It is a good bit off," responded the landlady; "but I cannot refuse to fetch some for such a civil, discreet lad, and will be as quick as I can; but, for any sake, take care and don't meddle with these pistols," she continued, pointing to a pair of pistols on the table, "for

they are loaded, and I am always terrified for them."

Saying this, she disappeared; and Miss Cochrane, who would have contrived some other errand for her, had the well been near, no sooner saw the door shut, than she passed, with trembling eagerness, and a cautious but rapid step, to the place where the man lay soundly sleeping, in one of those close wooden bedsteads common in the houses of the poor, the door of which was left half open to admit the air, and which she opened still wider, in the hope of seeing the mail-bag, and being able to seize upon it. But what was her dismay when she beheld only a part of the integument which contained what she would have sacrificed her life a thousand times to obtain, just peeping out from below the shaggy head and brawny shoulders of its keeper, who lay in such a position upon it as to give not the smallest hope of its extraction without his being aroused from his nap.

A few bitter moments of observation served to convince her that possession of this treasure must be obtained in some other way; and, again closing the door of the bed, she approached the pistols, and having taken them from the holsters, she as quickly as possible drew the loading, which having secreted, she then returned them to their cases, and resumed her seat at the foot of the table. She had barely time to recover from the agitation into which the fear of the man's awakening during her recent occupation had thrown her, when the old woman returned with the water; and having taken a draught, of which she stood much in need, she settled her account much to her landlady's content, by paying for the water the price of a pot of beer. Having then carelessly asked and ascertained how much longer the other guest was likely to continue his sleep, she left the house, and mounting her horse, set

off at a trot, in a different direction from that in which she had arrived.

Making a compass of two or three miles, she once more fell into the high road between Belford and Berwick, where she walked her horse gently on, awaiting the coming up of the postman. Though all her faculties were now absorbed in one aim, and the thought of her father's deliverance still reigned supreme in her mind, yet she could not help occasionally figuring to herself the possibility of her tampering with the pistols being discovered, and their loading replaced, in which case it was more than likely that her life would be the forfeit of the act she meditated. A woman's fears would still intrude, notwithstanding all her heroism, and the glorious issue which promised to attend the success of her enterprise. When she at length saw and heard the postman advancing behind her, the strong necessity of the case gave her renewed courage; and it was with perfect coolness that, on his coming close up, she civilly saluted him, put her horse into the same pace with his, and rode on for some way in his company. He was a strong, thick-set fellow, with a good-humoured countenance, which did not seem to Miss Cochrane, as she looked anxiously upon it, to savour much of hardy daring. He rode with the mail-bags (for there were two—one containing the letters direct from London, and the other those taken up at the different post-offices on the road) strapped firmly to his saddle in front, close to the holsters. After riding a short distance together, Miss Cochrane deemed it time, as they were nearly half-way between Belford and Berwick, to commence her operations. She therefore rode nearly close to her companion, and said, in a tone of determination,—

"Friend, I have taken a fancy for those mail-bags of yours, and I must have them; therefore, take my advice, and deliver them up quietly, for I am pro-

vided for all hazards. I am mounted, as you see, on a fleet steed; I carry fire-arms; and, moreover, am allied with those who are stronger, though not bolder than myself. You see yonder wood," she continued, pointing to one at the distance of about a mile, with an accent and air which was meant to carry intimidation with it; "again, I say, take my advice; give me the bags, and speed back the road you came for the present, nor dare to approach that wood for at least two or three hours to come."

There was in such language from a stripling something so surprising that the man looked on Miss Cochrane for an instant in silent and unfeigned amazement.

"If you mean, my young master," said he, as soon as he found his tongue, "to make yourself merry at my expense, you are welcome. I am no sour churl to take offence at the idle words of a foolish boy. But if," he said, taking one of the pistols from the holster, and turning its muzzle towards her, "ye are mad enough to harbour one serious thought of such a matter, I am ready for you. But, methinks, my lad, you seem at an age when robbing a garden or an old woman's fruit-stall would befit you better, if you must turn thief, than taking his Majesty's mails upon his own highway, from such a stout man as I am. Be thankful, however, that you have met with one who will not shed blood if he can help it, and sheer off before you provoke me to fire."

"Nay," said his young antagonist, "I am not fonder of bloodshed than you are; but if you will not be persuaded, what can I do? for I have told you a truth, *that mail I must and will have*. So now choose," she continued, as she drew one of the small pistols from under her cloak, and deliberately cocking it, presented it in his face.

"Then your blood be upon your own head," said the fellow, as he raised his

hand, and fired his pistol, which, however, only flashed in the pan. Dashing this weapon to the ground, he lost not a moment in pulling out the other, which he also aimed at his assailant, and fired with the same result. In a transport of rage and disappointment, the man sprung from his horse, and made an attempt to seize her; but by an adroit use of her spurs she eluded his grasp, and placed herself out of his reach. Meanwhile his horse had moved forward some yards, and to see and seize the advantage presented by this circumstance was one and the same to the heroic girl, who, darting towards it, caught the bridle, and having led her prize off about a hundred yards, stopped while she called to the thunderstruck postman to remind him of her advice about the wood. She then put both horses to their speed, and on turning to look at the man she had robbed, had the pleasure of perceiving that her mysterious threat had taken effect, and he was now pursuing his way back to Belford.

Miss Cochrane speedily entered the wood to which she had alluded, and tying the strange horse to a tree, out of all observation from the road, proceeded to unfasten the straps of the mail. By means of a sharp penknife, which set at defiance the appended locks, she was soon mistress of the contents, and with an eager hand broke open the Government dispatches, which were unerringly pointed out to her by their address to the council in Edinburgh, and their imposing weight and broad seals of office. Here she found not only the warrant for her father's death, but also many other sentences inflicting different degrees of punishment on various delinquents. These, however, it may be readily supposed, she did not then stop to examine; she contented herself with tearing them into small fragments, and placing them carefully in her bosom.

The intrepid girl now mounted her

steed, and rode off, leaving all the private papers as she had found them, imagining—what eventually proved the case—that they would be discovered ere long, from the hints she had thrown out about the wood, and thus reach their proper places of destination. She now made all haste to reach the cottage of her nurse, where, having not only committed to the flames the fragments of the dreaded warrant, but also the other obnoxious papers, she quickly resumed her female garments, and was again, after this manly and daring action, the simple and unassuming Miss Grizel Cochrane. Leaving the cloak and pistols behind her, to be concealed by her nurse, she again mounted her horse, and directed her flight towards Edinburgh, and by avoiding as much as possible the high road, and resting at sequestered cottages, as she had done before (and that only twice for a couple of hours each time), she reached town early in the morning of the next day.

It must now suffice to say that the time gained by the heroic act above related was productive of the end for which it was undertaken, and that Sir John Cochrane was pardoned, at the instigation of the king's favourite counsellor, who interceded for him in consequence of receiving a bribe of five thousand pounds from the Earl of Donald. Of the feelings which on this occasion filled the heart of his courageous and devoted daughter, we cannot speak in adequate terms; and it is perhaps best at any rate to leave them to the imagination of the reader. The state of the times was not such for several years as to make it prudent that her adventure should be publicly known; but after the Revolution, when the country was at length relieved from persecution and danger, and every man was at liberty to speak of the trials he had undergone, and the expedients by which he had mastered them, her heroism was neither unknown nor un-

approved. Miss Cochrane afterwards married Mr Ker of Moriston, in the county of Berwick; and there can be little doubt that she proved equally

affectionate and amiable as a wife, as she had already been dutiful and devoted as a daughter.—*Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*.

THE FATAL PRAYER.

THE village of Gourock is situated on the shore of a fine bay, about two miles from the town of Greenock. I was taken with the pleasantness of its situation, when one day viewing it at a little distance on the Greenock road, and sat down on the dyke by the roadside to enjoy the prospect at my leisure.

Presently an elderly man, of a grave aspect and a maritime appearance, passing slowly along the road, came and sat down near the same place. I guessed him to be one of the better class of fishermen, who had purchased, with the toil of his youth and his manhood, a little breathing-time to look about him in the evening of his days, ere the coming of night. After the usual salutations, we fell into discourse together, and I found him to be a man who had looked well about him in his pilgrimage, and reasoned on things and feelings—not living as the brutes that perish. After a pause in the conversation, he remarked, to my thinking, in a disjointed manner—

"Is it not strange, sir, that the thoughts that sometimes come into the brain of a man sleeping or waking—like a wind that blows across his bosom, coming he knows not whence, and going he knows not whither—leave behind them an impression and a feeling, and become the springs of human action, and mingle in the thread of human destiny?"

"Strange, indeed," said I. "What you say has more than once occurred to me; but being unable to reason satisfactorily on the subject, I set down

altogether such ideas as having no better foundation than the fears and superstitions of the ignorant. But it seems to me that your remark, though of a general nature, must have been made in mental reference to some particular thing; and I would fain crave to know what it is."

"You are right," said he; "I was thinking at the moment of something which has sat, for some days past, like a millstone on my mind: and I will tell it to you with pleasure."

So I edged myself closer to him on the stones, that I might hear the better; and without more ado he began to discourse as follows :

"About six months ago, a wedding took place in the village, and a more comely and amiable couple never came together. Mr Douglas, though the son of a poor man, had been an officer in the army,—an ensign, I believe,—and when his regiment was disbanded, he came to live here on his half-pay, and whatever little else he might have. Jeanie Stuart at the time was staying with an uncle, one of our own folk, her parents having both been taken away from her; and she made up, as far as she could, for her board, by going in the summer season to sew in the families that come from the great towns for the sea-bathing. So gentle she was, and so calm in her deportment, and so fair to look on withal, that even these nobility of the loom and the sugar-hogshead thought it no dishonour to have her among them; and uncon-

sciously, as it were, they treated her just as if she had been of the same human mould with themselves.

"Well, they soon got acquainted,—our Jeanie and Mr Douglas,—and drew kindly together ; and the end of it was they were married. They lived in a house there, just beyond the point that you may see forms the opposite angle of the bay, not far from a place called Kempock ; and Mr Douglas just employed himself, like any of us, in fishing and daundering about, and mending his nets, and such like. Jeanie was the happy woman now, for she had aye a mind above the commonality ; and, I am bold to say, thought her stay long enough among these would-be gentry, where she sat many a wearisome day for no use, and would fain have retired from their foolishness into the strength and greenness of her own soul. But now she had a companion and an equal, and indeed a superior ; for Mr Douglas had seen the world, and had read both books and men, and could wile away the time in discoursing of what he had seen and heard tell of in foreign lands, among strange people and unknown tongues. And Jeanie listened, and listened, and thought her husband the first of mankind. She clung to him as the honeysuckle clings to the tree : his pleasure was her pleasure—his sorrow was her sorrow—his bare word was her law.

"One day, about two weeks ago, she appeared dull and dispirited, and complained of a slight headache ; on which Mr Douglas advised her to go to bed and rest herself awhile ; which she said she would do ; and having some business in the village he went out. On coming back, however, in the forenoon, he found her just in the same spot, leaning her head on her hand ; but she told him she was better, and that it was nothing at all. He then began to get his nets ready, saying he was going out with some lads of

the village to the deep-sea fishing, and would be back the next day. She looked at him, but said nothing ; long and strangely she looked, as if wondering what he was doing, and not understanding anything that was going on. But finally when he came to kiss her and bid her good-bye, she threw her arms round him, and when he would have gone she held him fast, and her bosom heaved as if her heart would break ; but still she said nothing.

"'What can be the matter with you, Jeanie ?' said Mr Douglas.

"'Stay with me to-day,' said she at last ; 'depart not this night, just this one night—it is not much to ask—to-morrow you may go where you please, and I will not be your hindrance a moment.'

"But Mr Douglas was vexed at such folly, and she could answer nothing to his questions, except that a thought had come into her head, and she could not help it. So he was resolved to go, and kissing her fondly, he threw his nets on his shoulders and went away.

"For some minutes after his departure Jeanie did not move from the spot, but stood looking at the door whence he had gone out, and then began to tremble all over like the leaf of a tree. At length, coming to herself with a start, she knelt down, and throwing back her hair from her forehead, turned her face up towards heaven, and prayed with a loud voice to the Almighty, that she 'might have her husband in her arms that night.' For some moments she remained motionless and silent in the same attitude, till at length a sort of brightness, resembling a calm smile, passed over her countenance like a gleam of sunshine on the smooth sea, and bending her head low and reverently, she rose up. She then went as usual about her household affairs, and appeared not anything discomposed, but as tranquil and happy as if nothing had happened.

"Now the weather was fine and calm in the morning, but towards the afternoon it came on to blow ; and indeed the air had been so sultry all day, that the seafarers might easily tell there would be a racket of the elements before long. As the wind, however, had been rather contrary, it was supposed that the boats could not have got far enough out to be in the mischief, but would put back when they saw the signs in the sky. But in the meantime the wind increased, till towards night it blew as hard a gale as we have seen in these parts for a long time. The ships out there, at the Tail of the Bank, were driven from their moorings, and two of them stranded on their beam ends on the other side ; every stick and stitch on the sea made for any port they could find ; and as the night came on in darkness and thunder, it was a scene that might cow even hearts that had been brought up on the water as if it was their proper element, and been familiar with the voice of the tempest from their young days. There was a sad lamenting and murmuring then, among the women folk especially—them that were kith or kin to the lads on the sea ; and they went to one another's houses in the midst of the storm and the rain, and put in their pale faces through the darkness, as if searching for hope and comfort, and drawing close to one another like a flock of frightened sheep in their fellowship of grief and fear. But there was one who stirred not from her house, and who felt no terror at the shrieking of the night-storm, and sought for no comfort in the countenance of man—and that was the wife of Mr Douglas. She sometimes, indeed, listened to the howling of the sea that came by fits on her ear-like the voice of the water-kelpie, and starting would lay down her work for a moment ; but then she remembered the prayer she had prayed to Him who holds the reins of the tempest in His hands, and who says to the roaring

waters, 'Be still,' and they are still—and the glorious balm she had felt to sink into her heart at that moment of high and holy communion, even like the dew of heaven on a parched land. So her soul was comforted, and she said to herself, 'God is not a man that He can lie ;' and she rested on His assurance as on a rock, and laughed to scorn the tremblings of her woman's bosom. For why ? The anchor of her hope was in heaven, and what earthly storm was so mighty as to remove it ? Then she got up, and put the room in order, and placed her husband's slippers to air at the fireside ; and stirred up the fuel, and drew in the armchair for her weary and storm-beaten mariner. Then would she listen at the door, and look out into the night for his coming ; but she could hear no sound save the voice of the waters, and the roar of the tempest, as it rushed along the deep. She re-entered the house, and walked to and fro in the room with a restless step, but an unblenched cheek.

"At last the neighbours came to her house, knowing that her husband was one of those who had gone out that day, and told her that they were going to walk down towards the Clough, even in the mirk hour, to try if they could not hear some news of the boats. So she went with them, and we all walked together along the road—women and men, it might be, some twenty or thirty of us. But it was remarked, that though she came not hurriedly nor in fear, yet she had not even thrown her cloak on her shoulders, to defend her from the night air, but came forth with her head uncovered, and in her usual raiment of white, like a bride to the altar. As we passed along, it must have been a strange sight to see so many pale faces by the red glare of the torches they carried, and to hear so many human wailings filling up the pauses of the storm ; but at the head of our melancholy procession there was a calm heart and a firm step, and

they were Jeanie's. Sometimes, indeed, she would look back, as some cry of womanish foreboding from behind would smite on her ear, and strange thoughts would crowd into her mind ; and once she was heard to mutter—if her prayer had but saved her husband to bind some other innocent victim to the mysterious altar of wrath ! And she stopped for a moment, as if in anguish at the wild imagination.

"But now as we drew nearer the rocks where the lighthouse is built, sounds were heard distinctly on the shore, and we waved the torches in the air, and gave a great shout, which was answered by known voices—for they were some of our own people—and our journey was at an end. A number of us then went on before, and groped our way among the rocks as well as we could in the darkness ; but a woful tale met our ear ; for one of the boats had been shattered to pieces while endeavouring to land there, and when he went down they were just dragging the body of a comrade, stiff and stark, from the sea. When the women behind heard of this, there was a terrible cry of dismay, for no one knew but it might be her own husband, son, or brother ; and some who carried lights dropped them from fear, and others held them trembling to have the terrors of their hearts confirmed.

"There was one, however, who stood calm and unmoved by the side of the dead body. She spoke some words of

holy comfort to the women, and they were silent at her voice. She then stepped lightly forward, and took a torch from the trembling hand that held it, and bent down with it beside the corpse. As the light fell one moment on her own fair face, it showed no signs of womanish feeling at the sight and touch of mortality ; a bright and lovely bloom glowed on her cheek, and a heavenly lustre beamed in her eye ; and as she knelt there, her white garments and long dark hair floating far on the storm, there was that in her look which drew the gaze even of that terrified group from the object of their doubt and dread. The next moment the light fell on the face of the dead—the torch dropped from her hand, and she fell upon the body of her husband ! *Her prayer was granted.* She held her husband in her arms that night, and although no struggles of parting life were heard or seen, she died on his breast."

When the fisherman had concluded his story—and after some observations were made by us both, touching the mysterious warning, joined with a grateful acknowledgment that the stroke of death might be as often dealt in mercy as in wrath—we shook hands ; and asking one another's names, as it might so fortune that we should once more, in the course of our earthly pilgrimage, be within call of one another, the old man and I parted, going each his several way.—*Literary Melange.*

GLENMANNOW, THE STRONG HERDSMAN.

BY WILLIAM BENNET.

DUKE JAMES OF QUEENSBERRY, like others of our nobility and gentry, resided during a part of the year in London ; and on one of his visits to the

metropolis, he and a party of friends happened to have a match at discus, or, as it is more commonly called, "putting the stone." Several adepts

happened to be of the party, who boasted much of their superior strength and adroitness, and after making one of their best throws, offered to stake a large sum that not one of their companions knew of or could find a person to match it.

"The throw is certainly a good one," said the Duke of Queensberry; "yet I think it were easy to find many champions of sufficient muscle to show us a much better. I myself have a homely unpractised herdsman in Scotland, on whose head I will stake the sum you mention, that he shall throw the quoit fully two yards over the best of you."

"Done! produce your man!" was the reply of all; and the duke accordingly lost no time in dispatching a letter to one of his servants at Drumlanrig, ordering him to set out immediately on its receipt for Glenmannow, and to come with honest John M'Call to London without delay.

The duke's letter with Glenmannow was not less absolute than the order of an emperor. He wondered, but never thought of demurring; and without any further preparation than clothing himself in his Sunday's suit, and giving Mally his wife a few charges about looking to the hill in his absence, he assumed his large staff, and departed with the servant for "Lunnun."

On his arrival, the duke informed him of the purpose for which he had been sent, and desired that on the day, and at the hour appointed, he should make his appearance along with one of his servants, who knew perfectly the back streets and by-lanes of London, and who, after he should have decided the bet, would conduct him immediately in safety from the ground, as it was not improbable that his appearance and performance might attract a crowd and lead to unpleasant consequences. When the day arrived, the party assembled and proceeded to

the ground, where, to the duke's surprise, though not to his terror, his crafty opponents chose a spot directly in front of a high wall, and at such a distance that the best of their party should pitch the quoit exactly to the foot of it; so that their antagonist, to make good the duke's boast of "two yards over them," should be obliged to exceed them those two yards in height, instead of straight forward distance. This implied such an effort as amounted in their minds to a physical impossibility; and as the duke, from having neglected to specify the particular nature of the ground, could not legally object to this advantage, they looked upon the victory as already their own.

The quoit chosen was a large ball of lead, and already had the champion of the party tossed it to the wall, and demanded of the duke to produce the man appointed to take it up. His grace's servant, who fully comprehended the instructions given to him, entered at this crisis with the 'buirdly' and, to them, uncouth Glenmannow. His appearance attracted no small notice, and even merriment; but the imperturbable object of it regarded the whole scene with the indifference peculiar to his character; and, with his mind fixed only upon the great end for which he was there, requested to be shown the quoit, and the spots from which and to where it had been thrown. This demand was soon complied with, and while he assumed his station, with the quoit in his hand, the duke whispered in his ear the deception which had been practised, and urged him to exert his whole force in order to render it unavailing.

"Will you throw off your coat? It will give you more freedom," said his Grace in conclusion.

"My coat! Na, na; nae coats aff wi' me for this silly affair," replied he. "I thocht it had been some terrible throw or ither that thae chaps had

made, when I was ca'ed for a' the way to Lunnun to see to gang ayont them ; but if this be a', I wadna hae meanted ye to hae done't yoursel." Then poising the ball for a little in his hand, and viewing it with an air of contempt, "There !" said he, tossing it carelessly from him into the air, "he that likes may gang and fetch it back."

The ball, as if shot from the mouth of a cannon, flew on in a straight line completely over the wall, and alighted on the roof of a house at some distance beyond it. Its weight and velocity forced it through the tiles, and with a crash which immediately caused the house to be evacuated by its inmates, it penetrated also the garret floor, and rolled upon that of the next storey. An instantaneous hubbub ensued,—the party staring at each other in silence, and the crowd swearing it was the devil ! but the servant knew his duty, and in a twinkling Glenmannow was no longer amongst them.

His Grace, after paying for the damage done to the house, conducted the whole party to his residence, there to discharge their forfeit, and to gaze upon the prodigy by whom they were vanquished. Glenmannow was well rewarded for his trouble and loss of time in journeying to London ; and, over and above the immediate bounty of his Grace, he returned to his honest Mally with a discharge for one year's rent of the farm in his pocket.

One summer, during his Grace's residence at Drumlanrig, his friend the Duke of Buccleuch, who was at that time colonel of a regiment of fencibles, happened to be passing between Dumfries and Sanquhar with a company of his grenadiers ; and having made Thornhill a station for the night, he went and billeted himself upon his Grace of Queensberry, by whom he was received with a hearty welcome. The two friends deeming one night's intercourse too short, and Buccleuch's

marching orders not being peremptory in regard to time, it was agreed between them that they should spend the two succeeding days together, and that the soldiers, during that period, should be distributed among the tenantry around the castle.

Buccleuch, though a personal stranger to Glenmannow, was no stranger to his fame ; and it was contrived between them, that a few of the grenadiers should be dispatched to beat up his quarters, and endeavour to force themselves upon him as his guests. Six of the stoutest were accordingly selected for this purpose, and after being told the character of the person to whom they were sent, and the joke which was intended to follow it, they received a formal billet, and set out for their destination. Their orders were to enter the house in a seemingly rough manner, to find fault with everything, to quarrel with Glenmannow, and endeavour, if possible, to overpower and bind him ; but not on any account to injure either his person or effects in even the slightest degree. The soldiers, their commander knew, were arch fellows, and would acquit themselves in the true spirit of their instructions.

In those days few roads, excepting footpaths,—and those frequently too indistinctly marked to be traced by a stranger,—existed in the interior parts of the country. The soldiers, therefore, experienced no small difficulty in marshalling their way around the slope of the huge Cairnkinnow, in evading bogs and brakes, leaping burns and march dykes, and in traversing all the heights and hollows which lay between them and their secluded bourne. But the toils of their journey were more than compensated by the pleasures of it, for the pilgrim must possess little of either fancy or feeling, who could wander without delight amid the wild scenery of that mountainous district. When the

top of Glenquhargen is reached, and the bottom of the Glen of Scaur is beheld far, far beneath your feet; when the little river, which gives to the glen its name, is seen, descending from the hills, like an infant commencing the journey of life, into the long level holm which spreads its bosom to receive it; when, after descending, the eyes are cast around on its amphitheatre of Alpine hills, arrayed in "the brightness of green," and on the clouds that slumber, or the mists that curl along their summits; and when the head is thrown backward to contemplate the rocky peak of Glenquhargen, with the hawk, the gled, and the raven whirling, screaming, and croaking around it, that individual were dull and despicable indeed whose spirit would not fly forth and mingle, and identify itself, as it were, with the grand and the beautiful around him.

In a truly picturesque situation, on the side of one of the most northern of those hills, the soldiers beheld the house of Glenmannow. It was a low, thatch-roofed building, with a peat-stack leaning against one gable, and what might well be denominated a hut, which served for barn, byre, and stable, attached to the other; while a short way farther up the hill stood a round bucht, in which, upon occasion, the sturdy tenant was in the habit of penning his flock. A more modern structure has now been reared in the immediate vicinity of Glenmannow's domicile; yet in the beginning of the present century some vestiges of the ancient one were still remaining.

It was nearly noon when the party arrived in the "door-step;" yet at that late hour they found Mally busied in making a quantity of milk porridge for her own and her husband's breakfast, who had not yet returned from his morning visit to the hill. The appearance of soldiers in so sequestered a spot was to her a matter of scarcely less surprise than was that of the Spaniards

to the simple Indians, on their first landing upon the shores of the New World. Soldiers, too, are generally objects of terror in such places, where their names are associated in the minds of the peasantry only with ideas of oppression and of slaughter; and at the period referred to, this feeling was in much greater force than at present. Poor Mally endeavoured as much as possible to conceal her fears and embarrassment, and with all the politeness she was mistress of, desired the party to be seated. Her artifice, however, was far from equalling their penetration: they soon remarked her timorous side-glances and hesitating manner, as she walked backward and forward through the house; and they therefore resolved to divert themselves a little by working upon her prejudices.

"That bayonet of mine," said one of the fellows, "will never be as clear again, I am afraid. The blood of that old herd, whom we did away with as we came, sticks confoundedly to it."

Mally was at this moment dishing the porridge in two *goans*, one for herself and another for John, and on hearing this horrible annunciation, she made a dead pause, and letting go the foot of the pot, suffered it to fall to its perpendicular with a bang which forced the cleps out of her hand, and precipitated the whole, with a large quantity of undished porridge, to the floor.

"If we do any more such tricks to-day," continued another wag, "I shall wipe mine well before the blood dries upon it, and then it will not rust as yours has done."

Mally, regardless of the porridge she had spilt, now stepped with cautious, but quick and trembling steps to the door. Before she had reached the threshold—

"Come," cried the soldier who had thus spoken, "let us taste this food which the mistress has been preparing.

Good woman, return and give us spoons. No flinching ! We won't harm you, unless you provoke us to it. Why do you hesitate ? Are you unwilling to part with your victuals ? By my faith ! the walk we have had this morning has given us such appetites, that if you are not active, we shall have a slice off yourself !"

"O mercy !" cried Mally, staring wildly, "hae patience a wee, an I'se gie ye ocht that's in the house ; but dinna meddle wi' that goanfu' o' porridge, I beseech ye. They're our John's ; and if he comes frae the hill, and finds them suppet, he'll brain some o' ye, as sure as I'm livin'."

She then made for the cupboard, and began to draw from thence bread, butter, and cheese ; but the rogues, on hearing that John was so partial to his porridge, deemed this opportunity of arousing his ire too favourable to be lost, and they therefore insisted on being accommodated with spoons in order to "scart the coggie." Mally was obliged reluctantly to hand each a spoon from the wicker-creel which hung in the corner, and the six fellows were just in the act of devouring the contents of the goan, when honest Glenmannow made his appearance.

"What's a' this ?" were his first words, on entering and perceiving such a bevy of red-coats.

"Why, honest man, we have got a billet upon you," said one of them.

"A billet ! Wha frae ?"

"From the Duke of Queensberry, with whom our colonel, the Duke of Buccleuch, is stopping at present. We are just arrived ; it was a deuced long walk ; we were very hungry, and are just making free with your breakfast, until something better be prepared for us."

"Ye're makin' mair free than welcome, I doubt, my lads. I hae nae objection, since our juke has sent ye, to gie ye a nicht's quarters, an' to let ye live on the best we can afford ; but

I think ye might haen mair mense than to fa' on my parritch that way, like a wheen collies."

"Like what ? Hold your peace, sir," thundered the whole at once. "We are upon the king's service, and have a right to what we please, wher-ever we are billeted."

"For a' sakes, John, let them alone !" cried Mally, who saw the tempest that was gathering on her husband's brow. "We hae plenty o' meal in the house, and canna be mickle the waur o' what they'll tak for ae day an' nicht. Ye'se get something else to your breakfast directly." Then she went close to his side, and whispered into his ear the fearful conversation she had heard. Glenmannow, though he never knew what it was to fear, was of a disposition too quiet and mild not to be easily pacified, and the soldiers saw with regret his looks beginning to brighten under the influence of Mally's eloquence.

"Egad ! there's a fine calf before the window," cried one of them, whom a new thought had opportunely struck ; "Tom, go out and put a ball through it. We shall have a fine roast of veal, if this old lady knows how to manage it."

"Ye'll hae a fine roast deevil !" roared Glenmannow, now provoked beyond sufferance ; "I'll gie ye"—

"Down, down with him !" cried the whole party at once, springing up, and endeavouring to surround him. But in this they resembled a posse of mastiffs attacking some lordly bull, which the enraged animal shakes from his sides and tramples in the dust. In one instant Glenmannow's plaid was flung from him upon the bed ; his staff also, which was too long for use at such close quarters, was relinquished, and seizing by the collar and thigh the first of the fellows who attacked him, he used him against the others, both as a weapon and shield, with such fury and

effect, that they were all glad to provide for their safety by an instant retreat. Fortunately for them, the door chanced to be open, so that they reached the bent with comparatively little injury. But the poor fellow who was trussed in Glenmannow's grasp, and dashed against this and the other of them with such violence, had his body beaten almost to a mummy, and kept howling and calling for mercy in a most lamentable manner. By Glenmannow, however, he was totally unheard, until, on rushing to the door, his eye chanced to fall upon one of his own cars placed on end, and leaning against the side of the house. Tossing the soldier from him upon the grass, he immediately seized this rude vehicle, and, wrenching from it a limb, cast the huge weapon upon his shoulder, and bounded off in pursuit of his enemies.

By this time the soldiers had gained a hundred yards in advance, and were stretching away like greyhounds toward the summit of Glenquhargen. They were all nimble-footed, and the panic with which they were now actually seized gave wings to their speed, and rendered a matter of no regard the rocks and other impediments over which they were flying. Their pursuer was not more speedy, but much longer winded, and the rage which then impelled him was not less potent than their terror. He possessed a fund of physical ability which was almost inexhaustible, and he had sworn not to drop the pursuit till he had "smashed the hale set," so that from the length of the race the poor wights had but a small chance of safety. At length the top of Glenquhargen, then Cairnkinnow, and next Gowkthorn, were reached, without any loss or advantage to either party. From the latter of these places, the ground declines nearly the whole way to Drumlanrig, and the soldiers, with the start in their favour, flew on with a glimmering of hope that

now they could scarcely be overtaken. Their hope was realised, but not without such overstraining as had nearly proved equally fatal with the vengeance from which they fled. Leaning forward almost to the ground, and staggering like drunkards from excess of fatigue, they at last reached the western staircase which leads into the court of the castle. Behind them Glenmannow rushed on also with abated speed, but with indignation as hot as ever. He still bore upon his shoulder the ponderous car limb; his face was literally bathed in perspiration; and the wild expression of his eyes, and the foam which was beginning to appear at each corner of his mouth, rendered him a true personification of Giant Madness broken from his chains.

The two dukes, who had been informed of their approach by some servants who observed them descending the opposite heights, were waiting to receive them within the balustrade which runs along that side of the castle; but on marking the fury of Glenmannow, Duke James deemed it prudent to retire with the exhausted soldiers until the storm should be passed; for while his tenant remained in that mood of mind, he dared not, absolute as was his authority, to come into his presence. His brother of Buccleuch was therefore left to bear the first brunt of the salutation, who, on Glenmannow's approach, called out, "What is the matter? What is to do?" Glenmannow, without regarding this interrogatory further than by darting upon him a wild and fierce look, sprang up stairs, and rushed past him into the court of the castle. But here his progress was stopped; for among the several doors which lead from thence to every part of the castle, he knew not by which his enemies had entered. One, however, was known to him, and along that passage he rapidly hastened, until he at length arrived in

the kitchen. There he was equally at fault, and there his pursuit was ended ; for the smiles of the sonsy cook, and the fondlements of the various servants who thronged around him, succeeded in restoring his mind to a degree of calmness and repose. The cook eased his shoulder of the car limb, with the intention of repaying herself for the trouble by using it as fuel ; others divested him of his bonnet ; and all, with many words, prevailed upon him at last to assume a chair. After a moment's silence, in which he seemed to be lost in reflection, "Ay, ay," said he, "I see through a' this noo. It has been a trick o' the juke's makin' up." Then, with a serious air, he added, "But it was dangerous though ; for if I had gotten a haud o' thae chaps, wha kens what I might hae done !"

The duke, on being informed of this change wrought upon his tenant, and having learnt from the soldiers the way in which he had been deprived of his breakfast, ordered him a plentiful refreshment, and afterwards sent for him into the presence of himself and of Buccleuch. The breach between them was speedily healed ; and Glenmannow, nothing poorer for his race, returned shortly afterwards with a servant on horseback, who was dispatched to convey to headquarters the poor grenadier who had been so roughly handled in the affray.

Mally, with a humanity and forgiveness which the soldier had little right to expect, had succeeded in removing him from the spot where he was cast down, into the house, and having there laid him upon a bed, tended him with such kindness and care, that, by the

time of Glenmannow's return, he was so far recovered as to be able to sit upon the horse sent to remove him. Glenmannow, after Mally had wrapped round him a pair of blankets, bore him out in his arms, and placed him behind the servant, who in this manner conducted him in safety to Drumlanrig.

This is the last exploit of a remarkable kind which I have been able to glean respecting Glenmannow. He lived to a pretty long age, yet his life was abridged within its natural period by imprudently taxing his great strength beyond its actual capability. A high dyke was in the course of being built, from the heights on the left of the Nith into the channel of the river, about four miles above Drumlanrig, on the way to Sanquhar, and in order to resist the force of the current, the largest stones that could be moved were built into the dyke at its termination. One in particular, which lay near the place, was deemed excellently fitted for that purpose, but its weight rendered it unmanageable. Glenmannow undertook to lift it into its place, and in reality did so ; but in the effort he injured his breast and spine, and brought on a lingering disorder, of which he died in less than a twelvemonth afterwards, in the year 1705. I am not aware of his having left any descendants to perpetuate and spread his name ; one thing at least is certain, that in the present day none such are to be found in that district which was the principal scene of his exploits, and where still is cherished to such a degree his singular yet honest renown.—*Traits of Scottish Life, and Pictures of Scenes and Character.*

MY GRANDMOTHER'S PORTRAIT.

BY DANIEL GORRIE.

IN picture galleries, or in private apartments, portraits seldom receive much attention from visitors, unless they happen to have known the originals, or to be aware that the pictures are the productions of distinguished artists. And yet, whether we have known the originals or not, and apart altogether from the general artistic merit of the works, there are many portraits which have a wonderful effect in giving the mind a reflective and inquisitive turn. Portraits of this description may occasionally be seen in retired country houses of modest dimensions, where one need scarcely expect to find specimens of the highest class of art. Faces we may there observe, silently depending from the walls, on which strongly-pronounced character is depicted in spite of every artistic defect, and through the deep lines of which the record of a stirring or painful life seems to struggle earnestly for utterance. People are too much in the habit of regarding every person as commonplace and uninteresting who has not managed somehow to make a noise in the world ; but in these "counterfeit presentments" of men and women who have died in comparative obscurity, known only to their own circle of friends, we may see much that strangely moves our hearts, and makes us long to learn what their history has been.

Let the reader look in fancy on that old portrait hanging before me there on the wall. To me it is no dead picture, but rather does it seem the living embodiment of a maternal grandmother —a heroic old dame, who never lost heart whatever might betide, and of whom that image is now almost the sole remaining relic. Even a stranger

could scarcely fail to note with curious interest that small round face with nose and chin attenuated by years—those peering eyes, where a twinkle of youth yet breaks through the dim of old—that wrinkled brow, shaded with a brown frontage-braid of borrowed hair—and that compact little head, encased in a snow-white cap with its broad band of black ribbon. The least skilful artist could hardly have failed in depicting the features ; but the old familiar expression is also there, preserved as in amber, and the aged face is pleasantly blended in my mind with memories of early days. Detached incidents in her life, which she was fond of frequently relating to her grandchildren, who eagerly clustered around her, listening to the oft-told tale, recur to me with considerable freshness after the lapse of many years.

At the time when that portrait was taken, Mrs Moffat—as I shall name her—was well-nigh eighty years of age. For about the half of that period she had led a widowed life. Her husband, who witnessed many stirring scenes on sea and shore, had been a surgeon in the Royal Navy, and she was left "passing rich with forty pounds a year" of government pension.

There was one remarkable incident in his history to which she frequently recurred. Samuel Moffat obtained an appointment as surgeon on board the ill-fated *Royal George*; but before the time set apart for her leaving port, he found that the smell of the fresh paint of the new vessel created a feeling of nausea, which would have rendered him unfit for duty ; and by his good fortune in getting transferred, on this account, to another man-of-war, he escaped the sad fate that befell so many hapless victims—

When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men.

A striking incident of this kind naturally made a deep impression on his own mind, and it also formed a prominent reminiscence in the memory of his faithful partner during the long remainder of her life.

The earlier period of Mrs Moffat's widowhood was passed in Edinburgh ; but when death and marriage had scattered her family, she followed one of her married daughters to the country, and took up her abode in a neat poplar-shaded cottage on the outskirts of a quiet village, situated in a fertile and beautiful valley of the county that lies cradled in the twining arms of the Forth and the Tay. That cottage, with its garden behind, and pretty flower-borders in front, and with its row of poplar and rowan-trees, through which the summer breeze murmured so pleasantly, comes up vividly before my mind's eye at this moment. Beautiful as of yore the valley smiles around, with its girdling ridges belted with woods, and dotted with pleasant dwellings ; and away to westward, shutting in the peaceful scene from the tumult of the great world, rise the twin Lomond hills, glorious at morn and eve, when bathed in the beams of the rising and setting sun. The good old lady, who had spent a large portion of her life in "Auld Reekie," when narrow Bristo Street and Potter-row and the adjoining courts were inhabited by the better class of citizens, took kindly to the country cottage, and she was fond of the garden and flowers. With a basket on her arm, she trotted about the garden, apparently very busy, but doing little after all. In autumn, after a gusty night, one of her first morning occupations was to gather up the fallen ruddy apples, which she preserved for the special gratification of her grandchildren. Many a time and oft were they debarred

from touching the red berries of the rowan-trees, which look as tempting in children's eyes as did the forbidden fruit in those of Mother Eve. The girls were even enjoined not to make necklaces of these clustering red deceivers.

In that retired village there were, in those days, a good many well-to-do people, who had not found it very difficult to make money out of a generous soil. The different families lived on very sociable terms, and during the winter season there were rounds of tea-parties, winding up with cold suppers and hot toddy. Teetotalism was a thing unknown in that district and in those days, though I shall do the good folks the justice of saying that they knew the virtues of moderation. To all those winter gatherings of the local gentry, Mrs Moffat invariably received an invitation. They could not do without her, relishing as they did her ready wit and hearty good-humour. She was, in sooth, the life of every party. On such occasions she displayed all the artless buoyancy of youth, as if she had never endured the agonies of bereavement, or borne the burdens of life. She was then the very image of "Old Delight," and her aged face renewed its youth in the sunshine of joy. Some of the knowing lairds tried by bantering and otherwise to draw her out, and her quick cutting repartees were followed by explosions of mirth. It seemed marvellous that such a well of sunny mirth should be encased in that tiny frame. Indeed, it was nothing unusual for the hearty old lady to treat the company to a "canty" song at these village parties, and touches of melody still lingered about the cracks of her voice. When bothered overmuch to sing another song after she had already done enough, she generally met the request with a solitary stanza to this effect :—

There was a wee mannie an' a wee wife,
And they lived in a vinegar bottle ;

"And O," says the wee mannie to the wee wifie,
"Wow, but oor wold is little, is little!
Wow, but oor wold is little!"

Rare encounters of wit and amusing banter occasionally took place between her and a strange eccentric humorist of a lawyer of the old school, who frequently visited the village from a neighbouring country town. Old Bonthonron was the name by which he was familiarly known.

It may readily be imagined that, when old Mr Bonthonron and Mrs Moffat met in the same company, the fun would grow "fast and furious," and such certainly was the case. I have seen the hearty old humorist take the equally hearty old lady on his knee, and dandle her there like a child, greatly to their own delight and to the infinite amusement of the company. There will be less genial and boisterous mirth now-a-days, I should imagine, in that sequestered village.

Such was Mrs Moffat in her lightsome hours, when friends met friends; but her grandchildren were as much delighted with her when, in graver mood, she recalled early recollections, told them pleasant little stories, and narrated graphically what to her were eventful incidents in her life.

I can still remember some of the pleasant pictures she gave us of her early days. She was born in the town of Dalkeith, which is beautiful for situation, being planted in the midst of the richest woodland scenery, and she imprinted in our hearts vivid impressions of the delighted feelings with which, in the days of her girlhood, she looked through the gate of the Duke's great park, and saw the long winding avenue and the greensward traversed by nibbling sheep, and the magnificent trees whose "shadowing shroud" might cover a goodly company at their rural feast in the noontide of a summer's day. She described the rustic seats and summer-houses on the banks of a brook, that wandered at its own sweet will

through the wooded grounds—regions and resorts of joyance, where the children of the town, through the kindness of the then reigning Duke of Buccleuch, were permitted to spend the livelong summer's day, thus enabling them to store their memories with pleasing recollections, which might come back upon them in their declining days, like visions of beauty from lands of old romance. There was a pathetic story about a family of larks that had their nest in the Duke's Park, which she recited to us over and over again, by way of inculcating the virtue of treating kindly all the creatures of God. Her story was, that some of the young rascals of Dalkeith had caught the mother-bird in the nest, and had carried off her and the whole family of young ones at one fell swoop. The male bird, thus deprived at once of mate and family, took up his melancholy station near the nest, and mourned his loss with plaintive pipe for two days, at the end of which time the broken-hearted warbler died. This affecting incident, told with much seriousness and feeling, was not unproductive of good effect upon the young listeners. Cities and towns being still to us mysteries of which we had only a vague conception, it pleased us much to hear her tell how the bells of Dalkeith tolled children to bed, and how little boys walked through the streets at night, calling "Hot pies for supper!" It struck us that at whatever hour the bell tolled, we should have liked to remain out of bed till the pies went round.

On winter evenings, beside the good old lady's cottage fire, she was often constrained to recount her famous voyage to London, in which she well-nigh suffered shipwreck. The war-vessel on board of which her husband acted as surgeon had arrived in the Thames. He could not then obtain leave of absence, and as they had not met for many long months, she determined—protracted as the passage then

was from Leith to London—to make an effort to see her husband, and to visit the great metropolis. Steamers had not, at that period, come into existence, and the clipper-smacks that traded between Leith and London, and took a few venturesome passengers on their trips, dodged along the Scotch and English coasts for days and weeks, thus making a lengthened voyage of what is now a brief and pleasant sail. It was considered a bold and hazardous undertaking, in those days, for any lady to proceed alone on such a voyage. This, however, she did, as she was gifted with a wonderful amount of pluck, leaving her family in the charge of some friends till she returned.

The vessel had scarcely left the Firth of Forth, and got out into the open sea, when the weather underwent a bad turn, and soon they had to encounter all the fury of a severe storm, which caused many shipwrecks along the whole eastern seaboard. With a kind of placid contentment—nay, even with occasional glee—would she describe the protracted miseries and hardships they endured, having run short of supplies, and every hour expecting the vessel to founder. It was three weeks after leaving Leith until the smack was, as she described it, towed up the Thames like a dead dog, without either mast or bowsprit—a hapless and helpless hulk. However, she managed to see her husband, and the happiness of the meeting would be considered a good equivalent for the mishaps of the voyage. She saw, in the great metropolis, the then Prince of Wales—the “First Gentleman in Europe,” and used to relate, with considerable gusto (old ladies being more rough-and-ready then than now), how the Prince, as he was riding in St James’s Park, overheard a hussar in the crowd exclaiming, “He’s a d——d handsome fellow!” and immediately lifting his hat, his Royal Highness replied, “Thank you,

my lad ; but you put too much spice in your compliments !” That London expedition was a red-letter leaf in Mrs Moffat’s biography, and it was well thumbed by us juveniles. Her return voyage was comparatively comfortable, and much more rapid ; but she never saw her husband again, as he died at sea, and was consigned to the deep.

Even more interesting than the London trip were all the stories and incidents connected with her only son—our uncle who *ought* to have been, but who was dead before any of us were born. Through the kindness and influence of Admiral Greig of the Russian navy, he obtained a commission in the Russian service at an unusually early age—Russia and Britain being at that time in close alliance. Neither the Russian navy nor army was in the best condition, and the Emperor was very desirous to obtain the services of British officers, Scotsmen being preferred. Mrs Moffat loved her son with all the warmth of her kindly nature, and when he had been about a year or two in the Russian service, the news spread through Edinburgh one day, that a Russian man-of-war was coming up the Firth to Leith roads. I have heard the good lady relate the eventful incidents of that day with glistening eyes and tremulous voice.

The tidings were conveyed to her by friends who knew that she had some reason to be interested in the news. She had received no communication from her son for some time, as the mails were then very irregular, and letters often went amissing ; and, filled with the hope that he might be on board the Russian vessel that was approaching the roads, she immediately hurried off for Leith, whither crowds of people were already repairing, as a Russian war-vessel in the Forth was as great a rarity then as it is now. Before she arrived at the pier, the vessel had anchored in the roads, and the pier,

neither so long nor so commodious as it is now, was thronged with people pressing onwards to get a sight of the stranger ship. Nothing daunted by the crowd, Mrs Moffat squeezed herself forward, at the imminent risk of being seriously crushed. A gentleman who occupied a "coigne of vantage," out of the stream of the crowd, observed this slight-looking lady pressing forward with great eagerness. He immediately hailed her, and asked, as she appeared very much interested, if she expected any one, or had any friends on board. She replied that she half expected her son to be with the vessel. The gentleman, who was to her a total stranger, but who must have been a gentleman every inch, immediately took her under his protection, and having a telescope in his hand, he made observations, and reported progress.

One of the ship's boats had been let down, and he told her that he observed officers in white uniform rapidly descending. Mrs Moffat's eagerness and anxiety were now on the increase. The boat put off from the ship, propelled by sturdy and regular strokes, cutting the water into foam, which sparkled in the sunshine. When the boat had approached midway between the ship and the shore, Mrs Moffat asked her protector if he could distinguish one officer apparently younger than the others.

"Yes," he replied; "there is one who seems scarcely to have passed from boyhood to manhood."

Her eager impatience, with hope and fear alternating in her heart, seemed now to agitate her whole frame, and the bystanders, seeing her anxiety, appeared also to share in her interest.

At last the boat, well filled with officers, shot alongside the pier, the crowd rushing and cheering, as it sped onward to the upper landing-place. It was with great difficulty that the gentleman could restrain the anxious

mother from dashing into the rushing stream of people. When the crowd had thinned off a little, they made their way up the pier, and found that the officers had all left the boat and gone into the Old Ship Inn—probably because they had no desire of being mobbed. Mrs Moffat immediately went to the inn, and requested an attendant to ask if one of the officers belonged to Scotland, and if so, to be good enough to mention his name.

"Yes—Moffat!" was the cheery response, and in a short time mother and son were locked in each other's arms in the doorway of the Old Ship.

With a glee, not unmixed with tender regrets, she used to tell how, when she and the spruce young officer were proceeding up Leith Walk together to Edinburgh, an old woman stopped them, and, clapping him kindly on the shoulder, said—"Ay, my mannie, ye'll be a captain yet!" This prophecy of the old woman certainly met its fulfilment.

After staying a few days in the old home near the Meadows, young Moffat again took his departure, never more to see his affectionate mother, or the bald crown of Arthur Seat rising by the side of the familiar Firth. He joined the army (changes of officers from the navy to the army being then frequent in the Russian service), and enacted his part honourably in many memorable scenes. Still do I remember the tender and tearful care with which his old mother opened up the yellow letters, with their faded ink-tracings, which contained descriptions of the part he played in harassing the French, during their disastrous retreat after the burning of Moscow. One of these letters, I recollect, commenced thus—"Here we are, driving the French before us like a flock of sheep;" and in others he gave painful descriptions of their coming up to small parties of French soldiers who were literally glued

by the extreme frost to the ground—quite stiff and dead, but still in a standing attitude, and leaning on their muskets. Poor wretches ! that was their sole reward for helping to whet the appetite of an insatiable ambition. In those warlike times, young Moffat grew into favour, and gained promotion. He received a gold-hilted sword from the Emperor for distinguished service, but he succumbed to fatigue, and died on

foreign soil. The gold-headed sword and his epaulets, which he had bequeathed to a favourite sister, fell into the hands of harpies in London, and to this day have never reached Scotland.

In the quiet village Mrs Moffat spent her declining days in peace and sweet content, and she now sleeps in the village churchyard, till the last spring that visits the world shall waken inanimate dust to immortal life.

THE BAPTISM.

BY PROFESSOR WILSON.

IT is a pleasant and impressive time, when, at the close of divine service, in some small country church, there takes place the gentle stir and preparation for a baptism. A sudden air of cheerfulness spreads over the whole congregation ; the more solemn expression of all countenances fades away ; and it is at once felt that a rite is about to be performed which, although of a sacred and awful kind, is yet connected with a thousand delightful associations of purity, beauty, and innocence. Then there is an eager bending of smiling faces over the humble galleries—an unconscious rising up in affectionate curiosity—and a slight murmuring sound, in which is no violation of the Sabbath sanctity of God's house, when, in the middle passage of the church, the party of women is seen, matrons and maids, who bear in their bosoms, or in their arms, the helpless beings about to be made members of the Christian communion.

There sit, all dressed becomingly in white, the fond and happy baptismal group. The babies have been intrusted, for a precious hour, to the bosoms of young maidens, who tenderly fold them

to their yearning hearts, and with endearments taught by nature, are stilling, not always successfully, their plaintive cries. Then the proud and delighted girls rise up, one after the other, in sight of the whole congregation, and hold up the infants, arrayed in neat caps and long flowing linen, into their fathers' hands. For the poorest of the poor, if he has a heart at all, will have his infant well dressed on such a day, even although it should scant his meal for weeks to come, and force him to spare fuel to his winter fire.

And now the fathers were all standing below the pulpit, with grave and thoughtful faces. Each has tenderly taken his infant into his toil-hardened hands, and supports it in gentle and steadfast affection. They are all the children of poverty, and if they live, are destined to a life of toil. But now poverty puts on its most pleasant aspect, for it is beheld standing before the altar of religion with contentment and faith. This is a time when the better and deeper nature of every man must rise up within him, and when he must feel, more especially, that he is a spiritual and immortal being making covenant with

God. He is about to take upon himself a holy charge ; to promise to look after his child's immortal soul ; and to keep its little feet from the paths of evil, and in those of innocence and peace. Such a thought elevates the lowest mind above itself, diffuses additional tenderness over the domestic relations, and makes them who hold up their infants to the baptismal font, better fathers, husbands, and sons, by the deeper insight which they then possess into their nature and their life.

The minister consecrates the water ; and, as it falls on his infant's face, the father feels the great oath in his soul. As the poor helpless creature is wailing in his arms, he thinks how needful indeed to human infancy is the love of Providence ! And when, after delivering each his child into the arms of the smiling maiden from whom he had received it, he again takes his place for admonition and advice before the pulpit, his mind is well disposed to think on the perfect beauty of that religion of which the Divine Founder said, "Suffer little children to be brought unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven !"

The rite of baptism had not thus been performed for several months in the kirk of Lanark. It was now the hottest time of persecution ; and the inhabitants of that parish found other places in which to worship God and celebrate the ordinances of religion. It was now the Sabbath-day, and a small congregation of about a hundred souls had met for divine service in a place of worship more magnificent than any temple that human hands had ever built to Deity. Here, too, were three children about to be baptised. The congregation had not assembled to the toll of the bell, but each heart knew the hour and observed it ; for there are a hundred sun-dials among the hills, woods, moors, and fields, and the shepherd and the peasant see the hours passing by them in sunshine and shadow.

The church in which they were assembled was hewn by God's hand out of the eternal rocks. A river rolled its way through a mighty chasm of cliffs, several hundred feet high, of which the one side presented enormous masses, and the other corresponding recesses, as if the great stone girdle had been rent by a convulsion. The channel was overspread with prodigious fragments of rock or large loose stones, some of them smooth and bare, others containing soil and verdure in their rents and fissures, and here and there crowned with shrubs and trees. The eye could at once command a long stretching vista, seemingly closed and shut up at both extremities by the coalescing cliffs. This majestic reach of river contained pools, streams, rushing shelves, and waterfalls innumerable ; and when the water was low, which it now was in the common drought, it was easy to walk up this scene, with the calm blue sky overhead, an utter and sublime solitude. On looking up, the soul was bowed down by the feeling of that prodigious height of unscalable and often overhanging cliff. Between the channel and the summit of the far-extended precipices were perpetually flying rooks and wood-pigeons, and now and then a hawk, filling the profound abyss with their wild cawing, deep murmur, or shrilly shriek. Sometimes a heron would stand erect and still on some little stone island, or rise up like a white cloud along the black wall of the chasm and disappear. Winged creatures alone could inhabit this region. The fox and wild-cat chose more accessible haunts. Yet there came the persecuted Christians and worshipped God, whose hand hung over their heads those magnificent pillars and arches, scooped out those galleries from the solid rock, and laid at their feet the calm water in its transparent beauty, in which they could see themselves sitting in reflected groups, with their Bibles in their hands.

Here, upon a semicircular ledge of rocks, over a narrow chasm, of which the tiny stream played in a murmuring waterfall, and divided the congregation into two equal parts, sat about a hundred persons, all devoutly listening to their minister, who stood before them on what might well be called a small natural pulpit of living stone. Up to it there led a short flight of steps, and over it waved the canopy of a tall graceful birch-tree. This pulpit stood in the middle of the channel, directly facing that congregation, and separated from them by the clear deep sparkling pool into which the scarce-heard water poured over the blackened rock. The water, as it left the pool, separated into two streams, and flowed on each side of that altar, thus placing it on an island, whose large mossy stones were richly embowered under the golden blossoms and green tresses of the broom. Divine service was closed, and a row of maidens, all clothed in purest white, came gliding off from the congregation, and crossing the stream on some stepping-stones, arranged themselves at the foot of the pulpit, with the infants about to be baptized. The fathers of the infants, just as if they had been in their own kirk, had been sitting there during worship, and now stood up before the minister. The baptismal water, taken from the pellucid pool, was lying consecrated in a small hollow of one of the upright stones that formed one side or pillar of the pulpit, and the holy rite proceeded. Some of the younger ones in that semicircle kept gazing down into the pool, in which the whole scene was reflected, and now and then, in spite of the grave looks or admonishing whispers of their elders, letting a pebble fall into the water, that they might judge of its depth from the length of time that elapsed before the clear air-bells lay sparkling on the agitated surface. The rite was over, and the religious services of the day closed by a psalm. The

mighty rocks hemmed in the holy sound, and sent it in a more compacted volume, clear, sweet, and strong, up to heaven. When the psalm ceased, an echo, like a spirit's voice, was heard dying away up among the magnificent architecture of the cliffs, and once more might be noticed in the silence the reviving voice of the waterfall.

Just then a large stone fell from the top of the cliff into the pool, a loud voice was heard, and a plaid hung over on the point of a shepherd's staff. Their watchful sentinel had descried danger, and this was his warning. Forthwith the congregation rose. There were paths dangerous to unpractised feet, along the ledges of the rocks, leading up to several caves and places of concealment. The more active and young assisted the elder—more especially the old pastor, and the women with the infants; and many minutes had not elapsed, till not a living creature was visible in the channel of the stream, but all of them hidden, or nearly so, in the clefts and caverns.

The shepherd who had given the alarm had lain down again in his plaid instantly on the greensward upon the summit of these precipices. A party of soldiers were immediately upon him, and demanded what signals he had been making, and to whom; when one of them, looking over the edge of the cliff, exclaimed, “See, see, Humphrey! we have caught the whole tabernacle of the Lord in a net at last. There they are, praising God among the stones of the river Mouss. These are the Cartland Craigs. By my soul's salvation, a noble cathedral!” “Fling the lying sentinel over the cliffs. Here is a canting Covenanter for you, deceiving honest soldiers on the very Sabbath-day. Over with him, over with him—out of the gallery into the pit.” But the shepherd had vanished like a shadow; and, mixing with the tall green broom

and brushes, was making his unseen way towards the wood. "Satan has saved his servant. But come, my lads, follow me; I know the way down into the bed of the stream, and the steps up to Wallace's Cave. They are called the 'Kittle Nine Stanes.' The hunt's up—we'll be all in at the death. Halloo, my boys, halloo!"

The soldiers dashed down a less precipitous part of the wooded banks, a little below the "Craigs," and hurried up the channel. But when they reached the altar where the old gray-haired minister had been seen standing, and the rocks that had been covered with people, all was silent and solitary—not a creature to be seen.

"Here is a Bible dropped by some of them," cried a soldier; and with his foot spun it away into the pool.

"A bonnet! a bonnet!" cried another. "Now for the pretty sanctified face that rolled its demure eyes below it."

But after a few jests and oaths the soldiers stood still, eyeing with a kind of mysterious dread the black and silent walls of the rock that hemmed them in, and hearing only the small voice of the stream that sent a profounder stillness through the heart of that majestic solitude. "Curse these cowardly Covenanters! What if they tumble down upon our heads pieces of rock from their hiding-places? Advance? Or retreat?"

There was no reply; for a slight fear was upon every man. Musket or bayonet could be of little use to men obliged to clamber up rocks, along slender paths, leading they knew not where; and they were aware that armed men now-a-days worshipped God,—men of iron hearts, who feared

not the glitter of the soldier's arms, neither barrel nor bayonet; men of long stride, firm step, and broad breast, who, on the open field, would have overthrown the marshalled line, and gone first and foremost if a city had to be taken by storm.

As the soldiers were standing together irresolute, a noise came upon their ears like distant thunder, but even more appalling; and a slight current of air, as if propelled by it, passed whispering along the sweetbriers and the broom, and the tresses of the birch-trees. It came deepening and rolling, and roaring on, and the very Cartland Craigs shook to their foundation as if in an earthquake. "The Lord have mercy upon us!—what is this?" And down fell many of the miserable wretches on their knees, and some on their faces, upon the sharp-pointed rocks. Now it was like the sound of many myriad chariots rolling on their iron axles down the stony channel of the torrent. The old grayhaired minister issued from the mouth of Wallace's Cave, and said, with a loud voice, "The Lord God terrible reigneth!" A waterspout had burst up among the moorlands, and the river, in its power, was at hand. There it came—tumbling along into that long reach of cliffs, and in a moment filled it with one mass of waves. Huge agitated clouds of foam rode on the surface of a blood-red torrent. An army must have been swept off by that flood. The soldiers perished in a moment; but high up in the cliffs, above the sweep of destruction, were the Covenanters—men, women, and children, uttering prayers to God, unheard by themselves in that raging thunder.

THE LAIRD'S WOOING.

BY JOHN GALT.

THE laird began the record of his eighteenth year in these words :—

There lived at this time, on the farmstead of Broomlands, a person that was a woman, by calling a widow ; and she and her husband, when he was in this life, had atween them Annie Daisie, a dochter ;—very fair she was to look upon, comely withal, and of a feleecity o' nature.

This pretty Annie Daisie, I know not hoo, found favour in my eyes, and I made no scruple of going to the kirk every Sabbath day to see her, though Mr Glebeantieds was, to a certainty, a vera maksleepie preacher. When I for-gathered with her by accident, I was all in a confusion ; and when I would hae spoken to her wi' kindly words, I could but look in her clear een and nicher like Willie Gouk, the haverel laddie ; the which made her jeer me as if I had a want, and been daft likewise ; so that seeing I cam no speed in courting for myself, I thocht o' telling my mother ; but that was a kittle job,—howsoever, I took heart, and said—

“Mother !”

“Well, son,” she made answer, “what would ye ?”

“I’m going to be marriet,” quo’ I.

“Marriet !” cried she, spreading out her arms wi’ consternation. “And wha’s the bride ?”

I didna like just to gie her an even down answer, but said I thought myself old enough for a helpmeet to my table, which caused her to respond with a laugh ; whereupon I told her I was thinking of Annie Daisie.

“Ye’ll surely ne’er marry the like o’ her ;—she’s only a gair’ner’s dochter.”

But I thocht of Adam and Eve, and said—“We’re a’ come of a gair’ner ;”—

the which caused her presently to wax vera wroth with me ; and she stampit with her foot, and called me a blot on the ’scutcheon o’ Auldbiggins ; then she sat down, and began to reflec’ with herself ; and, after a season, she spoke rawtional about the connection, saying she had a wife in her mind for me, far more to the purpose than such a causey-dancer as Annie Daisie.

But I couldna bide to hear Annie Daisie mislikened, and yet I was feart to commit the sin of disobedience, for my mother had no mercy when she thought I rebelled against her authority ; so I sat down, and was in a tribulation, and then I speir’t, with a flutter of affliction, who it was that she had willed to be my wife.

“Miss Betty Græme,” said she ; “if she can be persuaded to tak sic a headowitz.”

Now this Miss Betty Græme was the tocherless sixth daughter o’ a broken Glasgow provost, and made her leevin’ by seamstress-work and flowering lawn ; but she was come of gentle blood, and was herself a gentle creature, though no sae blithe as bonnie Annie Daisie ; and for that I told my mother I would never take her, though it should be the death o’ me. Accordingly I ran out of the house, and took to the hills, and wistna where I was, till I found myself at the door of the Broomlands, with Annie Daisie before me, singing like a laverock as she watered the yarn of her ain spinning on the green. On seeing me, however, she stoppit, and cried—

“Gude keep us a’, laird !—what’s frightened you to flee hither ?”

But I was desperate, and I ran till her, and fell on my knees in a lover-like fashion ; but wha would hae thocht it ?

—she dang me ower on my back, and as I lay on the ground she watered me with her watering-can, and was like to dee wi' laughing : the which sign and manifestation of hatred on her part quenched the low o' love on mine ; an' I raise an' went hame, drookit and dripping as I was, and told my mother I would be an obedient and dutiful son.

Soon after this, Annie Daisie was marriet to John Lounlans ; and there was a fulsome phrasing about them when they were kirkit, as the comeliest couple in the parish. It was castor-oil to hear't ; and I was determined to be upsides with them, for the way she had jilted me.

In the meanwhile my mother, that never, when she had a turn in hand, alloot the grass to grow in her path, invited Miss Betty Græme to stay a week with us ; the which, as her father's family were in a straitened circumstance, she was glad to accept ; and being come, and her mother with her, I could discern a confabbing atween the twa auld leddies—Mrs Græme shaking the head of scrupulousy, and my mother laying down the law and the gospel ;—all denoting a matter-o'-money plot for me and Miss Betty.

At last it came to pass, on the morning of the third day, that Miss Betty did not rise to take her breakfast with us, but was indisposed ; and when she came to her dinner, her een were bleared and begrutten. After dinner, however, my mother that day put down, what wasna common with her house-wifery, a bottle o' port in a decanter, instead o' the gardevin for toddy, and made Miss Betty drink a glass to mak her better, and me to drink three, saying, "Faint heart never won fair leddy." Upon the whilk hint I took another myself, and drank a toast for better acquaintance with Miss Betty. Then the twa matrons raise to leave the room, and Miss Betty was rising too ; but her

mother laid her hand upon her shouther, and said—

"It's our lot, my dear, and we maun bear with it."

Thus it came to pass that I and Miss Betty were left by ourselves in a very comical situation.

There was silence for a space of time between us ; at last she drew a deep sigh, and I responded, to the best o' my ability, with another. Then she took out her pocket-napkin, and began to wipe her eyes. This is something like serious courting, thocht I to myself, for sighs and tears are the food of love ; but I wasna yet just ready to greet ; hoosever, I likewise took up my pocket-napkin, and made a sign of sympathy by blowing my nose, and then I said—

"Miss Betty Græme, how would ye like to be Leddy of Auldbiggins, under my mother ?"

"Oh, heavens !" cried she, in a voice that gart me a' dinnle ; and she burst into a passion of tears—the whilk to see so affectit me that I couldna help greeting too ; the sight whereof made her rise and walk the room like a dementit bedlamite.

I was terrified, for her agitation wasna like the raptures I expectit ; but I rose from my seat, and going round to the other side of the table where she was pacing the floor, I followed her, and pulling her by the skirt, said, in a gallant way, to raise her spirits—

"Miss Betty Græme, will ye sit doon on my knee ?"

I'll ne'er forget the look she gied for answer ; but it raised my courage, and I said, "E'en's ye like, Meg Dorts"—and with a flourish o' my heel, I left her to tune her pipes alone. This did the business, as I thocht ; for though I saw her no more that night, yet the next morning she came to breakfast a subdued woman, and my mother, before the week was out, began to make preparations for the wedding.

But, lo and behold ! one afternoon,

as Miss Betty and me were taking a walk, at her own request, on the high road, by came a whisky with a young man in it, that had been a penny-clerk to her father, and before you could say, hey cockolorum ! she was up in the gig, and doon at his side, and aff and away like the dust in a whirlwind.

I was very angry to be sae jiltit a second time, but it wasna with an anger like the anger I suffered for what I met with at the hands of Annie Daisie. It was a real passion. I ran hame like a clap o' thunder, and raged and rampaged till Mrs Græme was out of the house, bag and baggage. My mother thought I was gane wud, and stood and lookit at me, and didna daur to say nay to my commands. Whereas, the thocht o' the usage I had gotten frae Annie Daisie bred a heart-sickness of humiliation, and I surely think that if she had

not carried her scorn o' me sae far as to prefer a bare farmer lad like John Lounlans, I had hae sank into a decline, and sought the grave with a broken heart. But her marrying him roused my corruption, and was as souring to the milk of my nature. I could hae forgiven her the watering ; and had she gotten a gentleman of family, I would not have been overly discontented ; but to think, after the offer she had from a man of my degree, that she should take up with a tiller of the ground, a hewer of wood and a drawer of water, was gall and wormwood. Truly, it was nothing less than a kithing of the evil spirit of the democraws that sae withered the green bay-trees of the world, when I was made a captain in the volunteers, by order of the Lord Lieutenant, 'cause, as his lordship said, of my stake in the country.—“*The Last of the Lairds.*”

THOMAS THE RHYMER:

AN ANCIENT FAIRY LEGEND.

By SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THOMAS OF ERCELDOUNE, in Lauderdale, called the Rhymer on account of his producing a poetical romance on the subject of Tristrem and Yseult, which is curious as the earliest specimen of English verse known to exist, flourished in the reign of Alexander III. of Scotland. Like other men of talent of the period, Thomas was suspected of magic. He was also said to have the gift of prophecy, which was accounted for in the following peculiar manner, referring entirely to the Elfin superstition. As Thomas lay on Huntly Bank (a place on the descent of the Eildon hills, which raise their triple crest above the celebrated monastery of Melrose), he saw a lady so extremely beautiful that

he imagined it must be the Virgin Mary herself. Her appointments, however, were those rather of an amazon, or goddess of the woods. Her steed was of the highest beauty, and at his mane hung thirty silver bells and nine, which were music to the wind as she paced along. Her saddle was of “royal bone” (ivory), laid over with “orfeverie” (goldsmith’s work). Her stirrups—her dress—all corresponded with her extreme beauty and the magnificence of her array. The fair huntress had her bow in hand, and her arrows at her belt. She led three greyhounds in a leash, and three raches, or hounds of scent, followed her closely.

She rejected and disclaimed the

homage which Thomas desired to pay to her; so that, passing from one extremity to the other, Thomas became as bold as he had at first been humble. The lady warns him that he must become her slave, if he should prosecute his suit towards her in the manner he proposes. Before their interview terminates, the appearance of the beautiful lady is changed into that of the most hideous hag in existence. A witch from the spital or almshouse would have been a goddess in comparison to the late beautiful huntress. Hideous as she was, Thomas's irregular desires had placed him under the control of this hag, and when she bade him take leave of the sun, and of the leaf that grew on the tree, he felt himself under the necessity of obeying her. A cavern received them, in which, following his frightful guide, he for three days travelled in darkness, sometimes hearing the booming of a distant ocean, sometimes walking through rivers of blood, which crossed their subterranean path. At length they emerged into daylight, in a most beautiful orchard. Thomas, almost fainting for want of food, stretches out his hand towards the goodly fruit which hangs around him, but is forbidden by his conductress, who informs him that these are the fatal apples which were the cause of the fall of man. He perceives also that his guide had no sooner entered this mysterious ground, and breathed its magic air, than she was revived in beauty, equipage, and splendour, as fair or fairer than he had first seen her on the mountain. She then proceeds to explain to him the character of the country.

"Yonder right hand path," she says, "conveys the spirits of the blest to paradise. Yon downward and well-worn way leads sinful souls to the place of everlasting punishment. The third road, by yonder dark brake, conducts to the milder place of pain, from which

prayer and mass may release offenders. But see you yet a fourth road, sweeping along the plain to yonder splendid castle? Yonder is the road to Elfland, to which we are now bound. The lord of the castle is king of the country, and I am his queen. And when we enter yonder castle, you must observe strict silence, and answer no question that is asked at you, and I will account for your silence by saying I took your speech when I brought you from middle earth."

Having thus instructed her lover, they journeyed on to the castle, and entering by the kitchen, found themselves in the midst of such a festive scene as might become the mansion of a great feudal lord or prince.

Thirty carcases of deer were lying on the massive kitchen board, under the hands of numerous cooks, who toiled to cut them up and dress them, while the gigantic greyhounds which had taken the spoil lay lapping the blood, and enjoying the sight of the slain game. They came next to the royal hall, where the king received his loving consort without censure or suspicion. Knights and ladies, dancing by threes, occupied the floor of the hall, and Thomas, the fatigues of his journey from the Eildon hills forgotten, went forward and joined in the revelry. After a period, however, which seemed to him a very short one, the queen spoke with him apart, and bade him prepare to return to his own country.

"Now," said the queen, "how long think you that you have been here?"

"Certes, fair lady," answered Thomas, "not above these seven days."

"You are deceived," answered the queen; "you have been seven years in this castle; and it is full time you were gone. Know, Thomas, that the archfiend will come to this castle to-morrow to demand his tribute, and so handsome a man as you will attract his eye. For all the world would I not suffer you to

be betrayed to such a fate; therefore up, and let us be going."

This terrible news reconciled Thomas to his departure from Elfin land, and the queen was not long in placing him upon Huntly Bank, where the birds were singing. She took a tender leave of him, and to ensure his reputation bestowed on him the tongue which *could not lie*. Thomas in vain objected to this inconvenient and involuntary adhesion to veracity, which would make him, as he thought, unfit for church or for market, for king's court or for lady's bower. But all his remonstrances were disregarded by the lady, and Thomas the Rhymer, whenever the discourse turned on the future, gained the credit of a prophet whether he would or not; for he could say nothing but what was sure to come to pass.

Thomas remained several years in his own tower near Erceldoune, and enjoyed the fame of his predictions, several of which are current among the country people to this day. At length, as the prophet was entertaining the Earl of March in his dwelling, a cry of astonishment arose in the village, on the appearance of a hart and hind, which left the forest, and, contrary to their shy nature, came quietly onward, traversing the village towards the dwelling of Thomas. The prophet instantly rose from the board; and acknowledging the prodigy as the summons of his fate, he accompanied the hart and hind into the forest, and though occasionally seen by individuals to whom he has chosen to show himself, he has never again mixed familiarly with mankind.

Thomas of Erceldoune, during his retirement, has been supposed, from time to time, to be levying forces to take the field in some crisis of his country's fate. The story has often been told, of a daring horse-jockey having sold a black horse to a man of venerable and antique appearance, who appointed the remarkable hillock upon Eildon

hills, called the Lucken-hare, as the place where, at twelve o'clock at night, he should receive the price. He came, and his money was paid in ancient coin, and he was invited by his customer to view his residence. The trader in horses followed his guide in the deepest astonishment through several ranges of stalls, in each of which a horse stood motionless, while an armed warrior lay equally still at the charger's feet.

"All these men," said the wizard in a whisper, "will awaken at the battle of Sheriffmuir."

At the extremity of this extraordinary dépôt hung a sword and a horn, which the prophet pointed out to the horse-dealer as containing the means of dissolving the spell. The man in confusion took the horn, and attempted to wind it. The horses instantly started in their stalls, stamped, and shook their bridles; the men arose and clashed their armour, and the mortal, terrified at the tumult he had excited, dropped the horn from his hand. A voice like that of a giant, louder even than the tumult around, pronounced these words:—

Woe to the coward that ever he was born,
That did not draw the sword before he blew
the horn!

A whirlwind expelled the horse-dealer from the cavern, the entrance to which he could never again find. A moral might, perhaps, be extracted from the legend,—namely, that it is best to be armed against danger before bidding it defiance. But it is a circumstance worth notice, that although this edition of the tale is limited to the year 1715, by the very mention of Sheriffmuir, yet a similar story appears to have been current during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, which is given by Reginald Scot. The narrative is edifying as peculiarly illustrative of the mode of marring a curious tale in telling it, which was one of the

virtues professed by Caius when he hired himself to King Lear. Reginald Scot, incredulous on the subject of witchcraft, seems to have given some weight to the belief of those who thought that the spirits of famous men do, after death, take up some particular habitations near cities, towns, and countries, and act as tutelary and guardian spirits to the places they loved while in the flesh.

"But more particularly to illustrate this conjecture," says he, "I could name a person who hath lately appeared thrice since his decease, at least some ghostly being or other that calls itself by the name of such a person, who was dead a hundred years ago, and was in his lifetime accounted as a prophet or predictor, by the assistance of sublunary spirits; and now, at his appearance, did also give strange predictions respecting famine and plenty, war and bloodshed, and the end of the world. By the information of the person that had communication with him, the last of his appearances was in the following manner:—'I had been,' said he, 'to sell a horse at the next market town, but not attaining my price, as I returned home, by the way I met this man, who began to be familiar with me, asking what news, and how affairs moved through the country. I answered as I thought fit; withal I told him of my horse, whom he began to cheapen, and proceeded with me so far that the price was agreed upon. So he turned back with me, and told me that if I would go along with him, I should receive my money. On our way we went,—I upon my horse, and he on another milk-white beast. After much travel, I asked him where he dwelt, and what his name was. He told me that his dwelling was a mile off, at a place called *Farran*, of which place I had never heard,* though I knew all the

country round about. He also told me that he himself was the person of the family of Learmonth,[†] so much spoken of as a prophet. At which I began to be somewhat fearful, perceiving we were on a road which I had never been on before, which increased my fear and amazement more. Well! on we went till he brought me under ground, I knew not how, into the presence of a beautiful woman, who paid me the money without speaking a word. He conducted me out again through a large and long entry, where I saw above six hundred men in armour laid prostrate on the ground as if asleep. At last I found myself in the open field, by the help of the moonlight, in the very place where I first met him, and made a shift to get home by three in the morning. But the money I received was just double of what I esteemed it when the woman paid me, of which, at this instant, I have several pieces to show, consisting of ninepennies, threepence halfpennies, &c."

It is a great pity that this horse-dealer, having specimens of the fairy coin, of a quality more permanent than usual, had not favoured us with an account of an impress so valuable to medallists. It is not the less edifying, as we are deprived of the more picturesque parts of the story, to learn that Thomas's payment was as faithful as his prophecies. The beautiful lady who bore the purse must have been undoubtedly the Fairy Queen, whose affection, though, like that of his own Yseult, we cannot term it altogether laudable, seems yet to have borne a faithful and firm character.

the same ignorance as his namesake Reginald, though having at least as many opportunities of information."

* In this Sir Walter confesses himself "in

[†] In popular tradition, the name of Thomas the Rhymer was always averred to be Learmonth, though he neither uses it himself, nor is described by his son other than Le Rymour. The Learmonths of Dairsie, in Fife, claimed descent from the prophet.

LACHLAN MORE:

A TRADITIONARY TALE OF THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS.

LACHLAN MORE MACLEAN, of Duart, was one of the most remarkable men connected with the Highlands of Scotland in his days. His father having died early, King James the Fifth took a considerable interest in this young man, and he was educated at his expense. Lachlan's grandfather had been at the fatal battle of Flodden, with a large body of his clan, and he was killed in the immediate defence of his unfortunate prince.

The son and successor of James the Fourth was not unmindful of this, and he was desirous of forming a matrimonial connection between the young chief and the heiress of Athole. Preliminaries having been settled among the parties, the bridegroom was suddenly called to his own country, and on his way he visited the Earl of Glencairn, at his castle on the banks of the Clyde. Cards were introduced in the evening, and Maclean's partner was one of the earl's daughters. In the course of the evening the game happened to be changed, and the company again cut for partners; on which another of the daughters whispered in her sister's ear, that if the Highland chief had been her partner, she would not have hazarded the loss of him by cutting anew. The chief heard the remark, and was so pleased with the compliment, and so fascinated with the charm of Lady Margaret Cunningham, that a match was made up between them, and they were speedily married. Maclean thus gave great offence to the king, and lost the richest heiress at that time in Scotland.

Lachlan More's sister was married to Angus Macdonald, of Islay and Kintyre, then the most powerful of the branches

which sprung from the Lord of the Isles. These two chiefs appear to have been much of the same disposition,—both were violent, ambitious, and turbulent. Their bloody feuds were productive of much misery to their people, and ended injuriously to all parties. Macdonald, on his return from the Isle of Skye, was forced to take shelter in that portion of the island of Jura which was the property of Maclean; and it unfortunately happened that two villains of the clan Macdonald, whose bad conduct had induced them to take refuge in Mull, to escape punishment from their own chief, happened to be then in Jura. It would seem that they delighted in mischief, and they adopted an expedient which effectually answered their purpose.

Maclean had some cattle close to the place where the Macdonalds lay; the two renegades slaughtered some of these, and carried away many more of them. They left Jura before daylight, and contrived to convey information to Lachlan More that Macdonald had done him all this damage. Duart collected a considerable number of his men, and arrived in Jura before the Macdonalds departed. Without making proper inquiry into the circumstances, he rashly attacked the other party, and many of them were slain, but their chief escaped. It appears to be admitted on all hands that this was the beginning of the sanguinary warfare which followed, and Maclean was certainly culpable. Mutual friends interfered, and endeavoured to effect a reconciliation between persons so nearly connected. The Earl of Argyle was maternal uncle to Lachlan, and chiefly

by his powerful intercession the further effusion of blood was prevented for a time.

Macdonald had occasion to be again in Skye, and on his return he was invited by Maclean to visit him in the castle of Duart. After dinner, some unfortunate circumstance occurred which produced a quarrel. Tradition varies in regard to what immediately followed. It seems, however, that Maclean demanded that the other should yield to him possession of the whole island of Islay, of which he then held but the half. Some consideration was to have been given in return for this concession ; but Maclean chose to detain as hostages, to ensure the fulfilment of the treaty, the eldest son of Macdonald, then a boy, and also a brother, together with several other persons of some note. Maclean soon after set out for Islay to take possession of that island. His nephew accompanied him, but the other hostages were left in Mull until the whole business should be arranged. What ensued was no more than might have been expected : Macdonald pretended to be disposed for an amicable adjustment of the terms formerly agreed upon, and prevailed on Lachlan More to visit him at his house in Islay, where nothing appeared to create alarm.

After supper, Maclean and his people retired to a barn for rest ; but Macdonald soon knocked at the door, and said he had forgot to give his guests their reposing draught, and desired to be admitted for that purpose. A large force had by this time been collected, and Lachlan soon understood that he would be made to suffer for his former conduct. He was determined, however, to make a resolute defence. He stood in the door fully armed, and in his left hand he held his nephew, who lay with him. He was a man of extraordinary size and strength, as the appellation *More* indicates, and his situation required all his prowess.

Macdonald, desirous to save the life of his son, agreed to permit Lachlan to quit the barn, which had by this time been set on fire. The greater part of his attendants also followed their chief ; but the two Macdonalds, who had first fomented this unhappy quarrel, were consumed in the flames.

Macdonald of Islay having now recovered possession of his son, was determined to put Maclean and all his people to death ; but fortunately for them, he had a fall from his horse, by which one of his legs was fractured. This retarded the execution of his fell purpose, and enabled the Earl of Argyle to make a representation of the case to the government. Maclean was permitted to return to Mull ; but several of the principal gentlemen of his clan, who had accompanied them to Islay, were retained as hostages for the safety of those who still remained in the same condition at Duart.

Very soon after Maclean's departure from Islay, Macdonald of Ardnamurchan, commonly distinguished by the patronimic of *Mac-vic-Ian*, the son of John's son, arrived there, and falsely informed Macdonald that Lachlan More had destroyed all his hostages on his return home. This was retaliated on Maclean's hostages, who were all put to death, and the next day the other hostages arrived safely from Mull.

This is a specimen of the deplorable state of barbarism into which Scotland sunk during the minority of James the Sixth. The whole kingdom was full of blood and rapine, but the Highlands were in the worst condition of all. For a century afterwards very little amelioration seems to have taken place ; but it is pleasing to reflect that for the last fifty years there is not in Europe a country where the law bears more absolute sway than in the Scottish Highlands.

Macdonald and Maclean were both committed to ward, one in the Bass, and the other in the Castle of Edinburgh,

where they were detained for several years. They were liberated on strong assurances of peaceable conduct, and on giving hostages. Maclean was afterwards ordered to join the Earl of Argyle, who took the command of the army appointed to oppose the Earls of Huntly and Errol, then in open rebellion against the government of James the Sixth.

The two armies encountered at Glenlivat, and the rebels were victorious. Argyle, though brave, was young and inexperienced, nor were all his officers faithful to their trust. Innes, in his History of Moray, asserts that some of the principal men of his own name were in correspondence with the enemy; and other writers ascribe much effect to the cannon used by the rebel earls. On this occasion Lachlan More was greatly distinguished for bravery and for prudence, having acted the part of an experienced commander, and gained the applause of both armies.

It were well if he had always confined his warfare to such honourable combats. Soon after we find him again engaged in Islay against his nephew, James Macdonald, Angus, his former antagonist, being dead. On this occasion, it would seem, however, that he was disposed for peace. Lachlan had embraced the Protestant religion; and it was a practice with his Catholic ancestors to walk thrice in procession around the shores of a small island lying in Lochspelvie, invoking success to the expedition on which they were about to be engaged. With singular absurdity, Lachlan resolved to show his contempt for Catholic superstition: he walked thrice around the island, but his ancestors had always walked right about, or in the same course with the sun; but this enlightened Protestant reversed it. The day following he departed with his forces for

Islay, and he never returned. The weather became boisterous, and he was compelled to bear away for Island Nare, in the mouth of Loch Gruinard. A day was appointed for a conference between himself and his nephew; and Lachlan, attended by a small portion of his men, was to be met by Macdonald with an equal number. Macdonald had, however, placed a large body in ambush at some distance. The conference commenced under favourable appearances, but a misunderstanding soon arose, and swords were drawn. A dreadful conflict ensued, and Maclean fought with astonishing bravery. The reserve which had lain concealed joined their friends; but both were on the eve of being defeated, when a body of auxiliaries from the island of Arran arrived, and Lachlan More was killed, with all those who had accompanied him on this fatal expedition.*

His son had remained on the island with a much larger force, but the pacific appearances deceived him, and he neglected to keep the boats afloat. When the fight commenced on shore, he and his men were looking on, but could not launch their heavy boats, or render assistance. The Macdonalds suffered severe loss, and James (afterwards Sir James) was left for dead on the field.

A poor woman of his own clan, assisted by her son, conveyed Lachlan's body on a sledge to the church of Kilchomen, in Islay, where she got him buried. By the jolting of the sledge, the features of the body acquired a particular expression, at which the young man smiled. His name was Macdonald, and his mother was so enraged at his sneer, that she made a thrust at him with a dirk, and wounded him severely.—*Lit. Gazette.*

* Lachlan More was killed in the year 1598.

ALEMOOR:

A TALE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Sad is the wail that floats o'er Alemoor's lake,
 And nightly bids her gulfs unbottomed quake,
 While moonbeams, sailing o'er her waters blue,
 Reveal the frequent tinge of blood-red hue.
 The water-birds, with shrill discordant scream,
 Oft rouse the peasant from his tranquil dream ;
 He dreads to raise his slow unclosing eye,
 And thinks he hears an infant's feeble cry.—*Leyden.*

CHAPTER I.

IN one of those frequent incursions which the Scottish Borderers used to make into the sister territory, it was the misfortune of Sir John Douglas, a gallant and distinguished warrior, to be taken prisoner by Richard de Mowbray, who, to a naturally proud and vindictive temper, added a bitter and irreconcileable hatred to that branch of the house of Douglas to which his prisoner belonged. Instead of treating the brave and noble youth with that courtesy which the law of arms and the manners of the times authorised, he loaded his limbs with fetters, and threw him into one of the deepest dungeons of his baronial castle of Holme Cultrum. Earl de Mowbray, his father, was then at the English court, in attendance on his sovereign, so that he had none to gainsay his authority, but yielded, without hesitation or restraint, to every impulse of his passions. To what lengths the savage cruelty of his temper might have led him in practising against the life of his youthful prisoner is not known, for he was also summoned to London to assist in the stormy councils of that distracted period.

Meanwhile, Douglas lay on the floor of his dungeon, loaded with fetters, and expecting every hour to be led out to die. No murmur escaped his lips. He waited patiently till the fatal message

arrived, only regretting that it had not pleased Heaven to suffer him to die sword in hand, like his brave ancestors. “Yes!” he exclaimed, as he raised his stately and warlike form from the ground, and clashing his fettered hands together, while his dark eye shot fire; “yes! let false tyrannical Mowbray come with all his ruffian band—let them give me death by sword or by cord—my cheek shall not blanch, nor my look quail before them. As a Douglas I have lived, as a Douglas I shall die!” But the expected summons came not. Day after day passed on in sullen monotony, more trying to a brave mind than even the prospect of suffering. No sound broke in on the silence around him, but the daily visit of a veteran man-at-arms, who brought him his scanty meal. No entreaties could induce this man to speak, so that the unfortunate prisoner could only guess at his probable fate. Sometimes despondency, in spite of his better reason, would steal over his mind. “Shall I never again see my noble, my widowed mother? my innocent, playful sister?—never again wander through the green woods of Drumlanrig, or hunt the deer on its lordly domain? Shall my sight never again be greeted by the green earth or cheerful sun? Will these hateful walls enclose me till damp and famine destroy me,

and my withered limbs be left in this charnel-house, a monument of the cruelty and unceasing hatred of De Mowbray?"

Seven long weeks had rolled tediously along when the prisoner was surprised by his allowance being brought by a stranger in the dress of a Cumbrian peasant. Eagerly, rapidly he questioned the man respecting Mowbray, his intentions, and why he had been so long left without being allowed to name a ransom. The peasant told him of De Mowbray's absence, and added that, as there was to be a general invasion of Scotland, all the men-at-arms had been marched away that morning to join their companions, except the warders, by whom he had been ordered to bring food to the prisoner. Joy now thrilled through the heart and frame of the youthful warrior, but he had still enough of caution left to make no further inquiries, but allow his new jailer to depart without exciting his suspicions too early.

It is well known to those who are conversant with the history of that period, that, however bitter the animosities of the two nations were while engaged in actual warfare, yet in times of peace, or even of truce, the commons lived on friendly terms, and carried on even a sort of trade in cattle. All this was known to Sir John, who hoped, through the means of his new attendant, to open a communication with his retainers, if he could not engage him to let him free, and become a follower of the Douglas, whose name was alike, dreaded in both nations. But events over which he had no control were even then working for him, and his deliverance was to come from a quarter he thought not of.

At the date of this tale, the ladies of rank had few amusements when compared to those of modern times. Books, even if they could have been procured, would sometimes not have been valued

or understood, from the very limited education which, in those days, was allowed to females. Guarded in their inaccessible towers or castles, their only amusement was listening to the tales of pilgrims, or the songs of wandering minstrels, both of whom were always made welcome to the halls of nobles, and whose persons, like those of heralds, were deemed sacred even among contending parties. To be present at a tournament was considered as an event of the first importance, and looked forward to with the highest expectation, and afterwards formed an era in their lives. When such amusements were not to be had, a walk on the ramparts, attended by their trusty maid, was the next resource against the tedium of time. It was during such a walk as this that Emma, only daughter of Earl Mowbray, addressed her attendant as follows:—

"Do you think it possible, Edith, that the prisoner, whom my brother is so solicitous to conceal, can be that noble Douglas of whom we have heard so much, and about whom Graham, the old blind minstrel, sung such gallant verses?"

"Indeed, my sweet lady," replied her attendant, "the prisoner in yonder dungeon is certainly of the house of Douglas, and, as I think, the very Sir John of whom we have heard so much."

"How knowest thou that?" inquired her lady, eagerly.

"I had always my own thoughts of it," whispered Edith cautiously, and drawing nearer her mistress; "but since Ralph of Teesdale succeeded grim old Norman as his keeper, I am almost certain of it. He knows every Douglas of them, and, from his account, though the dungeon was dark, he believes it was Sir John who performed such prodigies of valour at the taking of Alnwick."

"May Heaven, then, preserve and succour him!" sighed the Lady Emma, as she clasped her hands together.

Emma De Mowbray, the only daughter of the most powerful and warlike of the northern earls, was dazzlingly fair, and her very beautiful features were only relieved from the charge of insipidity on the first look, by the lustre of her dark blue eyes, which were shaded by long and beautiful eye-lashes. Her stature was scarcely above the middle size, but so finely proportioned, that the eye of the beholder never tired gazing on it. She was only seventeen, and had not yet been allowed to grace a tournament, her ambitious father having determined to seclude his northern flower till he could astonish the Court of England with her charms, and secure for her such an advantageous settlement as would increase his own power and resources. Thus had Emma grown up the very child of nature and tenderness. Shut out from society of every kind, her imagination had run riot, and her most pleasing hours, when not occupied by devotional duties, were spent in musing over the romantic legends which she had heard either from minstrels, or those adventurers who oftentimes found a home in the castle of a powerful chief, and which were circulated among the domestics till they reached the ear of their youthful lady. These feelings had been unconsciously fostered by her spiritual director, Father Anselm, who, of noble birth himself, had once been a soldier, and delighted, in the long winter evenings, to recount the prowess of his youth; and in the tale of other years, often and often was the noble name of Douglas introduced and dwelt upon with enthusiastic rapture, as he narrated the chief's bravery in the Holy Land. In short, every circumstance combined to feed and excite the feverish exalted imagination of this untutored child. Had her mother lived, the sensibilities of her nature had been cherished and refined, and taught to keep within the bounds of their proper channel. As it was, they were allowed to run riot,

and almost led her to overstep the limits of that retiring modesty which is so beautiful in the sex. No sooner, then, had she learnt that Douglas was the captive of her haughty brother, and perhaps doomed to a lingering or ignominious death, than she resolved to attempt his escape, be the consequences what they would. A wild tumultuary feeling took possession of her mind as she came to this resolution. What would the liberated object say to her, or how look his thanks? and, oh! if indeed he proved to be the hero of her day-dreams, how blessed would she be to have it in her power to be his guardian angel! The tear of delight trembled in her eye, as she turned from the partisan of the castle, and sought the solitude of her chamber.

It was midnight—the last stroke of the deep-toned castle bell had been answered by the echoes from the neighbouring hills, when two shrouded figures stood by the couch of the prisoner. The glare of a small lantern, carried by one of them, awoke Douglas. He sprung to his feet as lightly as if the heavy fetters he was loaded with had been of silk, and in a stern voice told them he was ready. "Be silent and follow us," was the reply of one of the muffled visitors. He bowed in silence, and prepared to leave his dungeon,—not an easy undertaking, when it is remembered that he was so heavily ironed; but the care and ingenuity of his conductors obviated as much as possible even this difficulty; one came on each side, and prevented as much as possible the fetters from clashing on each other. In this manner they hurried him on through a long subterraneous passage, then crossed some courts which seemed overgrown with weeds, and then entered a chapel, where Douglas could perceive a noble tomb surrounded by burning tapers. "You must allow yourself to be blindfolded," said one of them in a sweet, musical, but suppressed voice;

he did so, and no sooner was the bandage made fast, than he heard the snap as of a spring, and was immediately led forward. In a few minutes more he felt he had left the rough stones of the church, and its chill sepulchral air, for a matted floor and a warmer atmosphere ; the bandage dropped from his eyes, and he found himself in a small square room, comfortably furnished, with a fire blazing in the chimney ; a second look convinced him he was in the private room of an ecclesiastic, and that he was alone.

It need not be told the sagacious reader that this escape was the work of Lady Emma, aided by Father Anselm, and Ralph Teesdale, who was her foster-brother, and therefore bound to serve her almost at the risk of his life—so very strong were such ties then considered. No sooner did Douglas learn from the venerable ecclesiastic to whom he owed his life and liberty, than he pleaded for an interview with all the warmth of gratitude which such a boon could inspire.

Recruited by a night of comfortable repose, and refreshed by wholesome food, our youthful warrior looked more like those of his name than when stretched on the floor of the dungeon. It was the evening of the second day after his liberation, while Douglas was listening to his kind and venerable host's account of the daring deeds by which his ancestor, the good Lord James, had been distinguished, when the door opened, and Lady Emma and her attendant entered. Instantly sinking on one knee, Sir John poured forth his thanks in language so courtly, so refined, yet so earnest and heartfelt, that Lady Emma's heart beat tumultuously, and her eyes became suffused with tears.

"Suffer me," continued Douglas, "to behold the features of her who has indeed been a guardian angel to the descendant of that house who

never forgave an injury, nor ever, while breath animated them, forgot a favour."

Lady Emma slowly raised her veil, and the eyes of the youthful pair met, and dwelt on each other with mutual admiration. Again the knight knelt, and, pressing her hand to his lips, vowed that he would ever approve himself her faithful and devoted champion. The conversation then took a less agitating turn, and, in another hour, Lady Emma took her leave of the good father and his interesting companion, in whose favour she could not conceal that she was already inspired with the most fervent feelings. Nor did she chide Edith, who, while she braided the beautiful locks of her mistress, expatiated on the fine form and manly features of Douglas, and rejoiced in his escape.

It was now time for Sir John to make some inquiries of Father Anselm about the state of the country, and if the Scotch had beat back their assailants in the attack made upon them, and learned, to his pleasure and surprise, that the enemy were then too much divided among themselves to think of making reprisals, the whole force of the kingdom being then gathered together to decide the claims of York and Lancaster to the crown of England ; that Earl Mowbray and his son, adherents of the queen, were then lying at York with their retainers, ready to close in battle with the adverse party. It might be supposed that this intelligence would inspire the captive with the wish to complete his escape, and return to Scotland. But no. A secret influence—a sort of charm—bound him to the spot ; he was fascinated ; he had no power to fly, even if the massy gates of the castle had unfolded themselves before him.

Bred up in the camp, Douglas was unused to the small sweet courtesies of life ; his hours, when in his paternal

towers of Drumlanrig, were chiefly spent in the chase, or in warlike exercises with his brothers, and the vassals of their house. His mother, a lady of noble birth, descended from the bold Seatons, encouraged such feelings, and kept up that state in her castle and retinue which befitted her high rank. His sister Bertha was a mere child, whom he used to fondle and caress in his moments of relaxation. But now a new world broke upon his astonished senses. He had seen a young, a beautiful lady, to whom he owed life and liberty, who, unsought, had generously come forward to his relief. Of the female character he knew nothing; if he did think of them, it was either invested with the matronly air of his mother, or the playful fondness of his sister. His emotions were new and delightful, and he longed to tell his fair deliverer all he felt; and he did tell her, and—she listened.

But why prolong the tale? Interview succeeded interview, till even Father Anselm became aware of their growing attachment. Alas! the good priest saw his error too late; and although, even then, he attempted to reason with both on the consequences of their passion,

yet his arguments made no impression.

"You will turn war into peace," whispered Lady Emma, as she listened to her spiritual director, "by healing the feud between the families."

"And you will, by uniting us," boldly exclaimed the youthful lover, "give to the Mowbrays a friend who will never fail in council or in field."

Overcome by these and similar arguments, the tender-hearted Anselm at last consented to join their hands. At the solemn hour of midnight, when the menials and retainers were bound in sleep, an agitated yet happy group stood by the altar of the castle chapel. There might be seen the noble form of Douglas, with a rich mantle wrapped round him, and the fair and beautiful figure of his bride, as she blushingly left the arm of her attendant to bestow her hand where her heart was already given. The light of the sacred tapers fell full upon the reverend form of Father Anselm, and the chapel reverberated the solemn words he uttered as he invoked Heaven to bless their union. The athletic figure of Ralph Teesdale was seen near the door to guard against surprise.

CHAPTER II.

NOTHING occurred for some time to mar the harmony and peace of the married lovers. At length their tranquillity was broken by accounts of the fatal and bloody battle of Towton, which gave a death-blow to the interests of the Lancastrians. This news spread consternation among the small party at Holme Cultrum. The question was, whether to remain and boldly confront the Mowbrays, or fly towards Scotland and endeavour to reach Drumlanrig; but the distracted state of the country forbade this plan, and the arrival of some fugitives from the field of battle

having brought the intelligence that both Earl Mowbray and his son were unwounded, and had fled to France, determined the party to remain where they were. This, however, they soon repented of, when they understood that a large body of Yorkists were in full march northwards to demolish all the castles held by the insurgent noblemen. This trumpet-note roused the warlike spirit of Douglas. He boldly showed himself to the soldiers, and swore to defend the castle to the last, or be buried in its ruins, if they would stand by him. But the men-at-arms, either unwilling

to fight under a stranger, or panic-struck at their late defeat, coldly met this proposal ; and while Father Anselm and Douglas were examining the outward works, they made their escape by a postern, leaving only two or three infirm old men, besides the menials, to resist the conquering army. Sir John, undaunted by the dastardly behaviour of the men, still continued his preparations, and inspired such courage into the hearts of his little garrison, that they vowed to stand by him to the last. But these preparations proved needless : Edward, either allured by the prospect of greater booty in some richer castle, or afraid of harassing his troops, turned aside into the midland counties, and left the bold-hearted Douglas to the enjoyment of his wife's society.

Months of unalloyed felicity were theirs ; and while England was torn by civil dissensions,—when the father pursued the son, and the son the father, and the most sacred bonds of nature were rent asunder at the shrine of party, and while the unburied dead gave the fields of merry England the appearance of a charnel-house,—all was peace, love, and joy within the walls of Holme Cultrum. Seated in the lofty halls of her fathers, Lady Emma appeared the personification of content ; hers was indeed that felicity she had not dared to hope for even in her wildest day-dreams. It was indeed a lovely sight to behold her leaning on the arm of her noble husband, listening to his details of well-fought fields ; her eye now sparkling with hope, and her cheek now blanched with terror, as they paced in the twilight the ample battlements of the castle : it was like the ivy clinging and clasping round the stately oak. If at such moments Douglas wearied of the monotony of existence, and half-wished he was once more in the front of battle, he had only to look in the soft blue eye of his Emma, press her to his heart, and everything else was forgot.

Summer had passed away, and the fields wore the golden livery of autumn. It was on a beautiful evening, while Douglas, Lady Emma, and Father Anselm, were enjoying the soothing breeze, when Ralph Teesdale rushed before them, his face pale and his trembling accents proclaiming his terror.

“ Fly, my lord ! ” addressing Douglas ; “ fly, for you are betrayed ; the earl is come, at the head of a band of mercenaries, and vows to have your head stuck on the battlements before tomorrow’s sun rise.”

“ I will not fly,” said Douglas ; “ boldly will I confront the earl, and claim my wife.”

“ My father is good, is kind ; he will yield to the prayers and tears of his Emma.”

“ Alas, alas ! my dearest and honoured lady,” rejoined her foster-brother, “ your noble father is no more, and ‘tis your brother who now seeks the life of Douglas.”

The first part of the sentence was only heard by Lady Emma, who fell senseless into the arms of her husband, and was immediately conveyed to her chamber by her ever-ready attendant. A hasty council was then held between Father Anselm and Douglas.

“ You had better take the advice of that faithful fellow, and give way. You know,” continued the priest, “ the dreadful temper and baleful passions of Richard de Mowbray. Not only your own life, but that of your wife, may fall a sacrifice to his fury, were he to find you. I am well aware that he has long considered his sister as an encumbrance on his succession, and will either cause her to be shut up in a convent, or secretly destroyed.”

Douglas shuddered at the picture, and asked the holy father what he should do.

“ Retreat to my secret chamber, in the first instance ; it were madness, and worse, to attempt to exclude the Earl de

Mowbray from his castle, even if we had sufficient strength within, which you know we have not. I shall cause Lady Emma to be conveyed there also when she recovers ; we must resolve on some scheme instantly ; the secret of the spring is unknown to all but your faithful friends."

Sir John at length complied, and was shortly afterwards joined in his retreat by Lady Emma and Edith. Flight—instant flight—was resolved on ; and the timid and gentle Emma, who had hardly ever ventured beyond the walls of the castle, declared she was ready to dare everything rather than be torn from her husband, or be the means of his being consigned to endless captivity, or, it might be, a cruel and lingering death. Father Anselm set off again in search of Ralph, and soon returned with the joyful intelligence that De Mowbray was still at a castle a few miles distant ; that those of his followers who had already arrived were then carousing deeply ; and as soon as the first watch was set, a pair of fleet horses would be waiting at the small postern, to which Douglas and his lady could steal unobserved, wrapt in horsemen's cloaks. The short interval which intervened was spent by Edith in making such preparations as were required for the travellers, and by the churchman in fervent petitions to Heaven for their safety. At length the expected signal was given from the chapel, and the agitated party stood at the low postern, where Ralph waited with the horses. It was some moments before the lady could disengage herself from the arms of her weeping attendant ; but the father hurried them away, and soon their figures were lost in the gloom, and their horses' tread became faint in the distance.

Well it was for the fugitives that their plans had been so quickly executed, for ere midnight the trumpets of De Mowbray sounded before the castle gate.

There all was uproar and confusion. The means of refreshment had been given with unsparing hand, and the wild spirits of the mercenaries whom he commanded were then in a state bordering on stupefaction from their lengthened debauch. The few who accompanied him were not much better, and he himself had all his evil passions inflamed by the wine he had quaffed with the Lord of Barnard Castle. Hastily throwing himself from his reeking charger, he entered his castle sword in hand, and ordered his sister to be brought before him, and the castle to be searched, from turret to foundation stone, for the presumptuous Douglas. Pale, trembling, and in tears, Edith threw herself at his feet.

"O, my good lord, my lady, my dear lady is ill, very ill, ever since she heard of the death of her honoured father. Tomorrow she will endeavour to see you."

"Off, woman !" he exclaimed. "This night I must and shall see my sister, dead or alive," and he arose with fury in his looks.

But Wolfstone, his lieutenant, a brave young man, stepped before him, and, drawing his sword, exclaimed—

" You must pass over my dead body ere you break in upon the sacred sorrows of Lady Emma."

There was something in the brave bearing of the gallant foreigner which even De Mowbray respected, for he lowered his voice, and stealing his hand from his dagger, said—

" And where is Father Anselm, that he comes not to welcome me to the halls of my fathers ? "

" He is gone," returned Edith, " to the neighbouring monastery, to say a mass for the honoured dead," and she devoutly crossed herself, turning her tearful eye on Wolfstone, who, with the most respectful tone, added—

" Go, faithful maiden ! say to your lady that Conrad Wolfstone guards her chamber till her pleasure is known."

"Now lead in our prisoner there ;" but a dozen of voices exclaimed against further duty that night.

"He sleeps sound in his dungeon," said De Mowbray's squire ; "and tomorrow you may make him sleep sounder, if you will. A cup of wine would be more to the purpose, methinks, after our long and toilsome march."

A hundred voices joined in the request. The wine was brought, and the tyrant soon forgot his projects of vengeance in a prolonged debauch. He slept too—that unnatural monster slept—and dreamt of his victims, and the sweet revenge that was awaiting him. It was owing to the presence of mind of Ralph that the flight of Douglas was not discovered. He had the address to persuade the half-inebriated soldiers that the prisoner was actually securely fettered in the dungeon which he had all along occupied. No sooner did he see them engaged in the new carousal than he hastened to join Edith in the secret chamber, where they united with Father Anselm in his devotions, and prayed for blessings on the head of their noble lord and lady.

Meanwhile the fugitives had reached Scotland, and were now leisurely pursuing their way, thinking themselves far beyond the reach of pursuit. On their first crossing the border, a shepherd's hut afforded the agitated Lady Emma an hour's repose and a draught of milk. The morning air revived her spirits, and once more she smiled sweetly as her husband bade her welcome to his native soil. From the fear of pursuit, they durst not take the most direct road to Drumlanrig, but continued to follow the narrow tracks among the hills, known only to huntsmen and shepherds.

It was now evening ; the sun was sinking among a lofty range of mountains, tinging their heathy summits with a purple hue, as his broad disc seemed to touch their tops. The travellers

were entering a narrow defile, at the end of which a small but beautiful mountain lake or loch burst upon their sight ; its waters lay delightfully still and placid, reflecting aslant a few alder bushes which grew on its banks, while the canna, or wild cotton grass, reared its white head here and there among the bushes of wild thyme which sent their perfume far on the air. The wild and melancholy note of the curlew, as she was roused from her nest by the travellers, or the occasional bleat of a lamb, was all that broke the universal stillness.

"Ah, my love," said Lady Emma, riding up close to her husband, "what a scene of peace and tranquillity ! Why could we not live here, far from courts and camps, from battle and bloodshed ? But," she continued, looking fondly and fixedly at her husband, "this displeases you,—think of it only as a fond dream, and pardon me."

"True, my Emma," returned Douglas, "these are but fond dreams ; the state of our poor country commands every man to do his duty, and how could the followers of the Bloody Heart sheath their swords, and live like bondsmen ? Never—never ! But let us ride on now ; the smoke from yonder cabin on the brow of the hill promises shelter for the night, and, ere to-morrow's sun go down, you shall be welcomed as the daughter of one of the noblest dames of Scotland. Ride on—the night wears apace."

Scarcely had the words passed his lips, when the quick tramp of a steed behind caused him to turn round. It was Mowbray, his eyes glaring with fury, and his frame trembling with rage and excitement.

"Turn, traitor ! coward ! robber ! turn, and meet your just punishment !"

"Coward was never heard by a Douglas unrevenged," was the haughty answer to this defiance, as he wheeled round to meet the challenger, at the

same time waving to Lady Emma to ride on ; but she became paralysed with fear and surprise, and sat on her palfrey motionless. Both drew their swords, and the combat began. It was furious but short : Douglas unhorsed his antagonist, and then, leaping from his own steed, went to assist in raising him, unwilling farther to harm the brother of his wife. But oh, the treachery and cruelty of the wicked ! No sooner did the tender-hearted Douglas kneel down beside him to ascertain the nature of his wounds, than Mowbray drew his secret dagger, and stabbed him to the heart.

The moon rose pale and cold on the waters of this inland lake, and showed distinctly the body of a female lying near its shore, while a dark heap, resembling men asleep, was seen at a little distance on a rising ground,—the mournful howl of a large dog only broke the death-like stillness. Soon, however, a horseman was seen descending the pass ; he was directed by the dog to the female, who still lay as if life indeed had fled. He sprung from his horse, and brought water from the lake, which he sprinkled on her face and hands. Long his efforts were unavailing, but at last the pulse of life began once more to beat, the eye opened, and she wildly exclaimed—

“O do not kill him !”

“He is safe for me, lady,” said the well-known voice of Ralph Teesdale.

“Thou here, my trusty friend !” murmured Lady Emma ; “bear me to Douglas, and all may yet be well.”

She could utter no more ; insensibility again seized her, and Ralph, lifting her up, bore her in his arms to what he supposed to be a shepherd’s cottage, but found it only a deserted summer sheiling. He was almost distracted, and, laying down his precious burden, wrapped in his horseman’s cloak, he ran out again in search

of assistance, though hardly hoping to find it in such a wild district, still closely followed by the dog, which continued at intervals the same dismal howl which had attracted the notice of Ralph as they ascended the hill. The sad note of the hound was answered by a loud barking, and never fell sounds more welcome on the ear of the faithful vassal. He followed the sounds, and they led him to a hut tenanted by a shepherd and his wife. His tale was soon told. They hastened with him to the deserted sheiling, where they found the object of their solicitude in a situation to demand instant and female assistance. There, amid the wilds of Scotland, in a comfortless cabin, the heir of the warlike and noble Sir John Douglas first saw the light. Long ere perfect consciousness returned, Lady Emma was removed to the more comfortable home of the shepherd, and there his wife paid her every possible attention.

The care of Ralph consigned the remains of the rival chiefs to one grave. It was supposed that De Mowbray had expired soon after giving Douglas the fatal stroke, as his fingers still firmly grasped the hilt of his dagger. Their horses and accoutrements were disposed of by the shepherd, and thus furnished a fund for the maintenance of the noble lady, who was so strangely cast upon their care. Many weeks elapsed ere she was aware she had neither husband nor brother.

Time, which calms or extinguishes every passion of the human heart, had exerted its healing influence over the mind of Lady Emma. She sat watching the gambols of her son on the banks of the peaceful lake, whose waters had first recalled her to life on the disastrous evening of his birth. There was even a smile on her pale thin lip, as he tottered to her knee, and laid there a handful of yellow wild-

flowers: She clasped the blooming boy to her heart, murmuring, "My Douglas!" On her first awakening to a full sense of her loss and forlorn condition, it was only by presenting her son to her that she could be persuaded to live; and when her strength returned, she determined to go to Drumlanrig, and claim protection for herself and child. But the prudence of Ralph suggested the propriety of his first going to ascertain the state of the family; and recommending his lady to the care of Gilbert Scott and his kind-hearted wife, he set out on his embassy. But sad was his welcome: the noble pile was a heap of blackened and smoking ruins, and the lady fled no one knew whither. Sad and sorrowful he returned to the mountain retreat, and was surprised at the calmness with which his honoured mistress heard his tale. Alas! he knew not that the pang she had already suffered made every other loss appear trivial!

The lonely sheiling was repaired and furnished. Here Lady Emma, in placid content, nursed her child, attended by her faithful foster-brother, who made occasional excursions to the neighbouring town to supply her with any necessary she required. On an occasion of this kind, when the lovely boy was nearly two years old, she sat at the door of her humble dwelling, listening to his sweet prattle. It was the first time he had attempted to say the most endearing of all words. She forgot her sorrows, and was almost happy. Her attention was soon called to some domestic concern within the cottage. The boy was on his accustomed seat at the door, when a shrill and piercing scream caused her to run

out. Need her anguish and despair be painted, when she saw her lovely boy borne aloft in the air in the talons of an eagle? To run, to scream, to shout, was the first movement of the frenzied mother; but vain had been her efforts, had she not been almost immediately joined by some of her neighbours, whose united efforts made the fatigued bird quit its prey and drop it into the loch. Many a willing heart, many an active hand, was ready to save the boy. He was delivered to his mother, but, alas! only as a drenched and nerveless corse. Human nature could endure no more. Her brain reeled, and reason fled for ever. Her faithful and attached follower returned to find his lady a wandering maniac. Year after year did he follow her footsteps, nor, till death put a period to her sufferings, did his care slacken for one instant. After he had seen her laid by her husband and brother, he bade adieu to the simple inhabitants, and it is supposed he fell in some of the border raids of the period, as he was never more heard of.

Reader, this tale is no idle fiction. On the borders of Alemoor Loch, in Selkirkshire, may still be seen a small clump of moss-grown trees, among which were one or two of the crab-apple kind, which showed that here the hand of cultivation had once been. Within this enclosure was a small green mound, to which tradition, in reference to the above story, gave the name of the Lady's Seat; and about half a mile to the south-west of the lonely loch is an oblong bench, with a rising ground above, still called the Chieftain's Grave.—*Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.*

T I B B Y F O W L E R .

BY JOHN MACKAY WILSON.

Tibby Fowler o' the glen,
A' the lads are wooin' at her.—*Old Song.*

ALL our readers have heard and sung of “Tibby Fowler o’ the glen ;” but they may not all be aware that the glen referred to lies within about four miles of Berwick. No one has seen and not admired the romantic amphitheatre below Edrington Castle, through which the Whitadder coils like a beautiful serpent glittering in the sun, and sports in fantastic curves beneath the pasture-clad hills, the gray ruin, the mossy and precipitous crag, and the pyramid of woods, whose branches, meeting from either side, bend down and kiss the glittering river, till its waters seem lost in their leafy bosom. Now, gentle reader, if you have looked upon the scene we have described, we shall make plain to you the situation of Tibby Fowler’s cottage, by a homely map, which is generally *at hand*. You have only to bend your arm, and suppose your shoulder to represent Edrington Castle, your hand Clarabad, and near the elbow you will have the spot where “ten cam rowing ower the water ;” a little nearer to Clarabad is the “lang dyke side,” and immediately at the foot of it is the site of Tibby’s cottage, which stood upon the Edrington side of the river ; and a little to the west of the cottage, you will find a shadowy row of palm-trees, planted, as tradition testifieth, by the hands of Tibby’s father, old Ned Fowler, of whom many speak until this day. The locality of the song was known to many ; and if any should be inclined to inquire how we became acquainted with the other particulars of our story, we have only to reply, that that belongs to a class of questions to which we do

not return an answer. There is no necessity for a writer of tales taking for his motto—*vitam impendere vero.* Tibby’s parents had the character of being “bien bodies ;” and, together with their own savings, and a legacy that had been left them by a relative, they were enabled at their death to leave their daughter in possession of five hundred pounds. This was esteemed a fortune in those days, and would afford a very respectable foundation for the rearing of one yet. Tibby, however, was left an orphan, as well as the sole mistress of five hundred pounds, and the proprietor of a neat and well-furnished cottage, with a piece of land adjoining, before she had completed her nineteenth year ; and when we add that she had hair like the raven’s wings when the sun glances upon them, cheeks where the lily and the rose seemed to have lent their most delicate hues, and eyes like twin dew-drops glistening beneath a summer moonbeam, with a waist and an arm rounded like a model for a sculptor, it is not to be wondered at that “a’ the lads cam wooin’ at her.” But she had a woman’s heart as well as woman’s beauty and the portion of an heiress. She found her cottage surrounded, and her path beset, by a herd of grovelling pounds-shillings-and-pence hunters, whom her very soul loathed. The sneaking wretches, who profaned the name of lovers, seemed to have *money* written on their very eyeballs, and the sighs they professed to heave in her presence sounded to her like stifled groans of—*Your gold—your gold!* She did not hate them.

but she despised their meanness ; and as they one by one gave up persecuting her with their addresses, they consoled themselves with retorting upon her the words of the adage, that “her *pride* would have a fall !” But it was not from pride that she rejected them, but because her heart was capable of love —of love, pure, devoted, unchangeable, springing from being beloved, and because her feelings were sensitive as the quivering aspen, which trembles at the rustling of an insect’s wing. Amongst her suitors there might have been some who were disinterested ; but the meanness and sordid objects of many caused her to regard all with suspicion, and there was none among the number to whose voice her bosom responded as the needle turns to the magnet, and frequently from a cause as inexplicable. She had resolved that the man to whom she gave her hand should wed her for herself—and for herself only. Her parents had died in the same month ; and about a year after their death she sold the cottage and the piece of ground, and took her journey towards Edinburgh, where the report of her being a “great fortune,” as her neighbours termed her, might be unknown. But Tibby, although a sensitive girl, was also, in many respects, a prudent one. Frequently she had heard her mother, when she had to take but a shilling from the legacy, quote the proverb, that it was

Like a cow in a clout,
That soon wears out.

Proverbs we know are in bad taste, but we quote it, because by its repetition the mother produced a deeper impression on her daughter’s mind than could have been effected by a volume of sentiment. Bearing therefore in her memory the maxim of her frugal parent, Tibby deposited her money in the only bank, we believe, that was at that period in the Scottish capital, and

hired herself as a child’s maid in the family of a gentleman who occupied a house in the neighbourhood of Restalrig. Here the story of her fortune was unknown, and Tibby was distinguished only for a kind heart and a lovely countenance. It was during the summer months, and Leith Links became her daily resort ; and there she was wont to walk, with a child in her arms and leading another by the hand, for there she could wander by the side of the sounding sea ; and her heart still glowed for her father’s cottage and its fairy glen, where she had often heard the voice of its deep waters, and she felt the sensation which we believe may have been experienced by many who have been born within hearing of old ocean’s roar, that wherever they may be, they hear the murmur of its billows as the voice of a youthful friend ; and she almost fancied, as she approached the sea, that she drew nearer the home which sheltered her infancy. She had been but a few weeks in the family we have alluded to, when, returning from her accustomed walk, her eyes met those of a young man habited as a seaman. He appeared to be about five-and-twenty, and his features were rather manly than handsome. There was a dash of boldness and confidence in his countenance ; but as the eyes of the maiden met his, he turned aside as if abashed, and passed on. Tibby blushed at her foolishness, but she could not help it ; she felt interested in the stranger. There was an expression, a language, an inquiry in his gaze, she had never witnessed before. She would have turned round to cast a look after him, but she blushed deeper at the thought, and modesty forbade it. She walked on for a few minutes, upbraiding herself for entertaining the silly wish, when the child who walked by her side fell a few yards behind. She turned round to call him by his name. Tibby

was certain that she had no motive but to call the child, and though she did steal a sidelong glance towards the spot where she had passed the stranger, it was a mere accident ; it could not be avoided—at least so the maiden wished to persuade her conscience against her conviction ; but that glance revealed to her the young sailor, not pursuing the path on which she had met him, but following her within the distance of a few yards, and until she reached her master's door she heard the sound of his footsteps behind her. She experienced an emotion between being pleased and offended at his conduct, though we suspect the former eventually predominated ; for the next day she was upon the Links as usual, and there also was the young seaman, and again he followed her to within sight of her master's house. How long this sort of dumb love-making, or the pleasures of diffidence, continued, we cannot tell. Certain it is that at length he spoke, wooed, and conquered ; and about a twelvemonth after their first meeting, Tibby Fowler became the wife of William Gordon, the mate of a foreign trader. On the second week after their marriage, William was to sail upon a long, long voyage, and might not be expected to return for more than twelve months. This was a severe trial for poor Tibby, and she felt as if she would not be able to stand up against it. As yet her husband knew nothing of her dowry, and for this hour she had reserved its discovery. A few days before their marriage she had drawn her money from the bank and deposited it in her chest.

"No, Willie, my ain Willie," she cried, "ye maunna, ye winna leave me already : I have neither faither, mother, brother, nor kindred ; naebody but you, Willie ; only you in the wide world ; and I am a stranger here, and ye winna leave your Tibby. Say that ye winna, Willie?" And she

wrung his hand, gazed in his face, and wept.

"I maun gang, dearest ; I maun gang," said Willie, and pressed her to his breast ; "but the thocht o' my ain wifie will mak the months chase anither like the moon driving shadows ower the sea. There's nae danger in the voyage, hinny ; no a grain o' danger ; sae dinna greet ; but come, kiss me, Tibby, and when I come hame I'll mak ye leddy o' them a'."

"Oh no, no, Willie!" she replied ; "I want to be nae leddy ; I want naething but my Willie. Only say that ye'll no gang, and here's something here, something for ye to look at." And she hurried to her chest, and took from it a large leather pocket-book that had been her father's, and which contained her treasure, now amounting to somewhat more than six hundred pounds. In a moment she returned to her husband ; she threw her arms around his neck ; she thrust the pocket-book into his bosom. "There, Willie, there!" she exclaimed ; "that is yours—my faither placed it in my hand wi' a blessing, and wi' the same blessing I transfer it to you ; but dinna, dinna leave me." Thus saying, she hurried out of the room. We will not attempt to describe the astonishment, we may say the joy, of the fond husband, on opening the pocket-book and finding the unlooked-for dowry. However intensely a man may love a woman, there is little chance that her putting an unexpected portion of six hundred pounds into his hands will diminish his attachment ; nor did it diminish that of William Gordon. He relinquished his intention of proceeding on the foreign voyage, and purchased a small coasting vessel, of which he was both owner and commander. Five years of unclouded prosperity passed over them, and Tibby had become the mother of three fair children. William sold his small vessel, and purchased a larger one, and in fitting it

up all the gains of his five successful years were swallowed up. But trade was good. She was a beautiful brig, and he had her called the *Tibby Fowler*. He now took a fond farewell of his wife and little ones upon a foreign voyage which was not calculated to exceed four months, and which held out high promise of advantage. But four, eight, twelve months passed away, and there was no tidings of the *Tibby Fowler*. Britain was then at war ; there were enemies' ships and pirates upon the sea, and there had been fierce storms and hurricanes since her husband left ; and Tibby thought of all these things and wept ; and her lisping children asked her when their father would return, for he had promised presents to all, and she answered, to-morrow, and to-morrow, and turned from them, and wept again. She began to be in want, and at first she received assistance from some of the friends of their prosperity ; but all hope of her husband's return was now abandoned. The ship was not insured, and the mother and her family were reduced to beggary. In order to support them, she sold one article of furniture after another, until what remained was seized by the landlord in security for his rent. It was then that Tibby and her children, with scarce a blanket to cover them, were cast friendless upon the streets, to die or to beg. To the last resource she could not yet stoop, and from the remnants of former friendship she was furnished with a basket and a few trifling wares, with which, with her children by her side, she set out, with a broken and sorrowful heart, wandering from village to village. She had journeyed in this manner for some months, when she drew near her native glen, and the cottage that had been her father's—that had been her own—stood before her. She had travelled all the day and sold nothing. Her children were pulling by her tattered gown, weeping and crying,

“ Bread, mother, give us bread ! ” and her own heart was sick with hunger.

“ Oh, wheesht, my darlings, wheesht ! ” she exclaimed, and she fell upon her knees, and threw her arms round the necks of all the three. “ You will get bread soon ; the Almighty will not permit my bairns to perish ; no, no, ye shall have bread.”

In despair she hurried to the cottage of her birth. The door was opened by one who had been a rejected suitor. He gazed upon her intently for a few seconds ; and she was still young, being scarce more than six-and-twenty, and in the midst of her wretchedness yet lovely.

“ Gude gracious, Tibby Fowler ! ” he exclaimed, “ is that you ? Poor creature ! are ye seeking charity ? Weel, I think ye'll mind what I said to you now, that your pride would have a fa' ! ”

While the heartless owner of the cottage yet spoke, a voice behind her was heard exclaiming, “ It is her ! it is her ! my ain Tibby and her bairns ! ”

At the well-known voice, Tibby uttered a wild scream of joy, and fell senseless on the earth ; but the next moment her husband, William Gordon, raised her to his breast. Three weeks before, he had returned to Britain, and traced her from village to village, till he found her in the midst of their children, on the threshold of the place of her nativity. His story we need not here tell. He had fallen into the hands of the enemy ; he had been retained for months on board of their vessel ; and when a storm had arisen, and hope was gone, he had saved her from being lost and her crew from perishing. In reward for his services, his own vessel had been restored to him, and he was returned to his country, after an absence of eighteen months, richer than when he left, and laden with honours. The rest is soon told. After Tibby and her husband had wept upon each other's neck, and he had kissed his children,

and again their mother, with his youngest child on one arm, and his wife resting on the other, he hastened from the spot that had been the scene of such bitterness and transport. In a few years more, William Gordon having obtained a competency, they re-pur-

chased the cottage in the glen, where Tibby Fowler lived to see her children's children, and died at a good old age in the house in which she had been born—the remains of which, we have only to add, for the edification of the curious, may be seen until this day.

DANIEL CATHIE, TOBACCONIST.

DANIEL CATHIE was a reputable dealer in snuff, tobacco, and candles, in a considerable market town in Scotland. His shop had, externally, something neat and enticing about it. In the centre of one window glowed a transparency of a ferocious-looking Celt, bonneted, plaided, and kilted, with his unsheathed claymore in one hand, and his ram's-horn mull in the other; intended, no doubt, to emblem to the spectator, that from thence he recruited his animal spirits, drawing courage from the titillation of every pinch. Around him were tastefully distributed jars of different dimensions, bearing each the appropriate title of the various compounds within, from Maccuba and Lundy Foot down to Beggar's Brown and Irish Blackguard. In the other, one half was allotted to tobacco pipes of all dimensions, tastefully arranged, so as to form a variety of figures, such as crosses, triangles, and squares; decorated at intervals with rolls of twist, serpentining of pigtail, and monticuli of shag. The upper half displayed candles, distributed with equal exhibition of taste, from the prime four in the pound down to the halfpenny dip; some of a snowy whiteness, and others of an aged and delicate yellow tinge; enticing to the eyes of experienced housewives and spectacled cognoscenti. Over the door rode a

swarthy son of Congo, with broad nostrils, and eyes whose whites were fearfully dilated,—astride on a tobacco hogshead,—his woolly head bound with a coronal of feathers, a quiver peeping over his shoulder, and a pipe in his cheeks blown up for the eternity of his wooden existence, in the ecstasy of inhalation.

Daniel himself, the autocrat of this domicile, was a little squat fellow, five feet and upwards, of a rosy complexion, with broad shoulders, and no inconsiderable rotundity of paunch. His eye was quick and sparkling, with something of an archness in its twinkle, as if he loved a joke occasionally, and could wink at any one who presumed so far in tampering with his shrewdness. His forehead was bald, as well as no small portion of either temple; and the black curls, which projected above his ears, gave to his face the appearance of more than its actual breadth, which was scantily relieved by a slight blue spotted handkerchief, loosely tied around a rather apoplectic neck.

His dress was commonly a bottle-green jacket, single-breasted, and square in the tails; a striped cotton waistcoat; velveteen breeches, and light blue ridge-and-furrow worsted stockings. A watch-chain, of a broad steel pattern, hung glittering before him, at which depended a small gold seal, a white

almond-shaped shell, and a perforated Queen Anne's sixpence. Over all this lower display, suppose that you fasten a clean, glossy linen apron, and you have his entire portrait and appearance.

From very small beginnings he had risen, by careful industry, to a respectable place in society, and was now the landlord of the property he had for many years only rented.

Matters prospered, and he got on by slow but steady paces. Business began to extend its circle around him, and his customers became more respectable and genteel.

In a short time Daniel opened accounts with his banker. His establishment became more extensive ; and after the lapse of a few not unimproved years, he took his place in the first rank of the merchants of a populous burgh.

His lengthening purse and respectable character pointed him out as a fit candidate for city honours, and the town-council pitched upon him as an eligible person to grace their board. This was a new field opened for him. His reasoning powers were publicly called into play ; and he had, what he had never before been accustomed to, luxurious eating and drinking, and both without being obliged to put his hand into his breeches-pocket. Daniel was a happy man—

No dolphin ever was so gay
Upon the tropic sea.

He now cogitated with his own mighty mind on the propriety of entering upon the matrimonial estate, and of paying his worship to the blind god. With the precision of a man of business, he took down in his note-book a list of the ladies who, he thought, might be fit candidates for the honour he intended them, the merits of the multitude being settled, in his mind, in exact accordance with the supposed extent of their treasures. Let not the reader mistake the term. By treasure he

neither meant worth nor beauty, but the article which can be paid down in bullion or in bank-notes, possessing the magic properties of adding field to field, and tenement to tenement.

One after another the pen was drawn through their names, as occasion offered of scrutinising their means more clearly, or as lack-success obliged him, until the candidates were reduced to a couple ; to wit—Miss Jenny Drybones, a tall spinster, lean and ill-looking, somewhat beyond her grand climacteric ; and Mrs Martha Bouncer, a brisk widow, fat, fair, and a few years on the better side of forty.

Miss Jenny, from her remote youth upwards, had been housekeeper to her brother, a retired wine merchant, who departed this life six years before, without occasioning any very general lamentation ; having been a man of exceedingly strict habits of business, according to the jargon of his friends ; that is to say, in plain English, a keen, dull, plodding, avaricious old knave.

But he was rich, that was one felicity ; therefore he had friends. It is a great pity that such people ever die, as their worth, or, in other words, their wealth, cannot gain currency in the other world ; but die he did, in spite of twenty thousand pounds and the doctor, who was not called in till death had a firm grip of the old miser's windpipe, through which respiration came scant and slow, almost like the vacant yawns of a broken bellows.

Expectant friends were staggered, as by a thunder-stroke, when the read will, too legal for their satisfaction, left Miss Jenny in sure and undivided possession of goods and chattels all and sundry.

For the regular period she mourned with laudable zeal, displaying black feathers, quilled ruffles, crape veils, and starched weepers, in great and unwonted prodigality, which no one objected to, or cavilled about, solely because no one had any business to do so.

It was evident that her views of life from that era assumed a new aspect, and the polar winter of her features exhibited something like an appearance of incipient thaw ; but the downy chin, wrinkled brow, and pinched nose, were still, alas ! too visible. Accordingly, it is more than probable that, instead of renewing her youth like the eagles, she had only made a bold and laudable attempt to *rifacciamento*, in thus lighting up her features with a more frequent and general succession of smiles.

No one can deny that, in as far as regards externals, Miss Jenny mourned lugubriously and well, not stinting the usually allotted number of calendar months. These passed away, and so did black drapery ; garments brightening by progressive but rapid strides. Ere the twelve months expired, Miss Jenny flaunted about in colours as gaudy as those of "the tiger-moth's deep damasked wings,"—the counterpart of the bird of paradise, the rival of the rainbow.

Widow Martha Bouncer was a lady of a different stamp. Her features still glowed in the freshness of youthful beauty, though the symmetry of her person was a little destroyed by a tendency to corpulency. She dressed well ; and there was a liveliness and activity about her motions, together with an archness in her smile, which captivated the affections of the tobacconist, rather more than was compatible with his known and undisguised hankering after the so-called good things of this life, the flesh-pots of Egypt.

Mrs Bouncer was the widow of a captain in a marching regiment ; consequently she had seen a good deal of the world, and had a budget of adventures ever open for the admiration of the listening customer. Sometimes it might even be objected, that her tongue went a little too glibly ; but she had a pretty face and a musical voice, and seldom failed in being attended to.

The captain did not, as his pro-

fession might lead us to surmise, decamp to the other world, after having swallowed a bullet, and dropped the death-dealing blade from his blood-besmeared hand on the field of battle, but quietly in his bed, with three pairs of excellent blankets over him, not reckoning a curiously quilted counterpane. Long anticipation lessens the shock of fate ; consequently the grief of his widow was not of that violent and overwhelming kind which a more sharply-wound-up catastrophe is apt to occasion ; but, having noticed the slow but gradual approaches of the grim tyrant, in the symptoms of swelled ankles, shrivelled features, troublesome cough, and excessive debility, the event came upon her as an evil long foreseen ; and the sorrow occasioned by the exit of the captain was sustained with becoming fortitude.

Having been fully as free of his sacrifices to Bacchus as to the brother of Bellona, the captain left his mate in circumstances not the most flourishing ; but she was enabled to keep up appearances, and to preserve herself from the gulf of debt, by an annuity bequeathed to her by her father, and by the liberality of the widows' fund.

Time passed on at its usual careless jog-trot ; and animal spirits, being a gift of nature, like all strong natural impulses, asserted their legitimate sway. Mrs Martha began to smile and simper as formerly. Folks remarked, that black suited her complexion ; and Daniel Cathie could not help giving breath to the gallant remark, as he was discharging her last year's account, that he never before had seen her looking half so well.

On this hint the lady wrought. Daniel was a greasy lubberly civilian to be sure, and could not escort her about with powdered collar, laced beaver, and glittering epaulettes ; but he was a substantial fellow, not amiss as to looks, and with regard to circumstances,

possessing everything to render a wife comfortable and snug. Elysian happiness, Mrs Martha was too experienced a stager to expect on this side of the valley of death. Moreover, she had been tossed about sufficiently in the world, and was heartily tired of a wandering life. The height of her wise ambition, therefore, reached no higher than a quiet settlement and a comfortable domicile. She knew that the hour of trial was come, and sedulously set herself to work, directing against Daniel the whole artillery of her charms. She passed before his door every morning in her walk ; and sometimes stood with her pretty face directed to the shop window, as if narrowly examining some article in it. She ogled him as he sat in church ; looking as if she felt happy at seeing him seated with the bailies ; and Daniel was never met abroad, but the lady drew off her silken glove, and yielded a milk-white delicate hand to the tobacconist, who took a peculiar pleasure in shaking it cordially. A subsequent rencontre in a stage coach, where they enjoyed a delightful tête-à-tête together for some miles (*procul, & procul esto profani*), told with a still deeper effect ; and everything seemed in a fair way of being amicably adjusted.

Miss Jenny, undismayed by these not unmarked symptoms of ripening intimacy, determined to pursue her own line of amatory politics, and set her whole enginery of attack in readiness for operation. She had always considered the shop at the cross as the surest path for her to the temple of Bona Fortuna. Thence driven, she was lost in hopeless mazes, and knew not where to turn.

She flaunted about, and flashed her finery in the optical observers of Daniel, as if to say, This is a specimen,—*ex uno discere omnes*,—thousands lie under this sample. Hope and fear swayed her heart by turns, though the former passion was uppermost ; yet she saw a

snake, in the form of Mrs Bouncer, lurking in her way ; and she took every lawful means, or such as an inamorata considers such, to scotch it.

Well might Daniel be surprised at the quantity of candles made use of in Miss Jenny's establishment. It puzzled his utmost calculation ; for though the whole house had been illuminated from top to bottom, and fours to the pound had been lighted at both ends, no such quantity could be consumed. But there she was, week after week, with her young vassal with the yellow neck behind her, swinging a large wicker-basket over his arm, in which were deposited, layer above layer, the various produce of Miss Jenny's marketing.

On Daniel, on these occasions, she showered her complaisance with the liberality of March rains ; inquiring anxiously after his health ; cautioning him to wear flannel, and beware of the rheumatics ; telling him her private news, and admiring the elegance of his articles, while all the time her shrivelled features “grinned horrible a ghastly smile,” which only quadrupled the “fold upon fold innumerable” of her wrinkles, and displayed gums innocent of teeth,—generosity not being able to elevate three rusty stumps to that honour and dignity.

There was a strong conflict in Daniel's mind, and the poor man was completely “bamboozled.” Ought he to let nature have its sway for once, take to his arms the blushing and beautiful widow, and trust to the success of his efforts for future aggrandisement ? Or must strong habit still domineer over him, and Miss Jenny's hook, baited with twenty thousand pounds, draw him to the shores of wedlock, “a willing captive?” Must he leave behind him sons and daughters with small portions, and “the world before them, where to choose ;” or none—and his name die away among the things of the past, while cousins ten times removed alike

in blood and regard, riot on his substance? The question was complicated, and different interrogatories put to the oracle of his mind afforded different responses. The affair was one, in every respect, so nicely balanced, that "he wist not what to do." Fortune long hung equal in the balance, and might have done so much longer, had not an unforeseen accident made the scale of the widow precipitately mount aloft, and kick the beam.

It was about ten o'clock on the night of a blustering November day, that a tall, red-haired, moustachioed, and raw-boned personage, wrapt up in a military great-coat, alighted from the top of the *Telegraph* at the Salutation Inn, and delivered his portmanteau into the assiduous hands of Bill the waiter. He was ushered into a comfortable room, whose flickering blazing fire mocked the cacophony of his puckered features, and induced him hastily to doff his envelopments, and draw in an arm-chair to the borders of the hearthrug.

Having discussed a smoking and substantial supper, he asked Bill, who was in the act of supplying his rummer with hot water, if a Mrs Bouncer, an officer's widow, resided in the neighbourhood.

"Yes," replied Bill, "I know her well; she lives at third house round the corner, on the second floor, turning to the door on your right hand."

"She is quite well, I hope?" asked the son of Mars.

"Oh! quite well, bless you; and about to take a second husband. I hear they are to be proclaimed next week. She is making a good bargain."

"Next week to be married!" ejaculated the gallant captain, turning up his eyes, and starting to his legs with a hurried perplexity.

"So I believe, sir," continued Bill very calmly. "If you have come to the ceremony, you will find that it does not take place till then. Depend upon

it, sir, you have mistaken the date of your invitation card."

"Well, waiter, you may leave me," said the captain, stroking his chin in evident embarrassment; "but stop, who is she about to get?"

"Oh, I thought everybody knew Mr Daniel Cathie, one of the town-council, sir; a tobacconist, and a respectable man; likely soon to come to the provostry, sir. He is rather up in years to be sure; but he is as rich as a Jew."

"What do you say is his name?"

"Daniel Cathie, Esq., tobacconist, and a candlemaker near the Cross. That is his name and designation,—a very respectable man, sir."

"Well, order the girl to have my bed well warmed, and to put pens, ink, and paper into the room. In the meantime, bring me the boot-jack."

The captain kept his fiery feelings in restraint before Bill; but the intelligence hit him like a cannon-shot. He retired almost immediately to his bed-chamber; but a guest in the adjoining room declared in the morning, that he had never been allowed to close his eyes, from some person's alternately snoring or speaking in his sleep, as if in violent altercation with some one; and that, whenever these sounds died away, they were only exchanged for the irregular tread of a foot measuring the apartment, seemingly in every direction.

It was nine in the morning; and Daniel, as he was ringing a shilling on the counter, which he had just taken for "value received," and half ejaculating aloud as he peered at it through his spectacles—"Not a Birmingham, I hope"—had a card put into his hand by Jonas Bunting, the Salutation shoebblack.

Having broken the seal, Daniel read to himself,—"A gentleman wishes to see Mr Cathie at the Salutation Inn, on particular business, as speedily as possible. Inquire for the gentleman in No. 7.—A quarter before nine, A.M."

"Some of these dunning travellers!" exclaimed Daniel to himself. "They are continually pestering me for orders. If I had the lighting up of the moon, I could not satisfy them all. I have a good mind not to go, for this fellow not sending his name. It is impudence with a vengeance, and a new way of requesting favours!" As he was muttering these thoughts between his teeth, however, he was proceeding in the almost unconscious act of undoing his apron, which having flung aside, he adjusted his hair before the glass, carefully pressed his hat into shape, and drew it down on his temples with both hands; after which, with hasty steps, he vanished from behind the counter.

Arriving at the inn, he was ushered into No. 7 by the officious Bill, who handed his name before him, and closed the door after him.

"This is an unpleasant business, Mr Cathie," said the swaggering captain, drawing himself up to his full length, and putting on a look of important ferocity. "It is needless to waste words on the subject: there is a brace of pistols, both are loaded,—take one, and I take the other; choose either, sir. The room is fully eight paces," added he, striding across in a hurried manner, and clanking his iron heels on the carpet.

"It would, I think, be but civil," said Daniel, evidently in considerable mental as well as bodily agitation, "to inform me what are your intentions, before forcing me to commit murder. Probably you have mistaken me for some other; if not, please let me know in what you conceive I have offended you!"

"By the powers!" said Captain Thwackeray with great vehemence, "you have injured me materially,—nay, mortally,—and either your life, sir, or my own, sir, shall be sacrificed to the adjustment."

While saying this, the captain took up first the one pistol, and then the other, beating down the contents with the ramrod, and measuring with his finger the comparative depth to which each was loaded.

"A pretty story, certainly, to injure a gentleman in the tenderest part, and then to beg a recital of the particulars. Have you no regard for my feelings, sir?"

"Believe me, sir, on the word of an honest man, that as to your meaning in this business, I am in utter darkness," said Daniel with cool firmness.

"To be plain, then,—to be explicit,—to come to the point, sir,—are you not on the eve of marrying Mrs Bouncer?"

"Mrs Bouncer!" echoed the tallow-chandler, starting back, and crimsoning. Immediately, however, commanding himself, he continued:—"As to the truth of the case, that is another matter; but were it as you represent it, I was unaware that I could be injuring any one in so doing."

"Now, sir, we have come to the point; *rem tetigisti acu*; and you speak out plainly. Take your pistol," bravado the captain.

"No, no,—not so fast;—perhaps we may understand each other without being driven to that alternative."

"Well then, sir, abjure her this moment, and resign her to me, or one of our lives must be sacrificed."

While he was saying this, Daniel laid his hands on one of the pistols, and appeared as if examining it; which motion the captain instantly took for a signal of acquiescence, and "changed his hand, and checked his pride."

"I hope," continued he, evidently much softened, "that there shall be no need of resorting to desperate measures. In a word, the affair is this:—I have a written promise from Mrs Bouncer, that, if ever she married a second time, her hand was mine. It matters not with the legality of the measure, though the

proceeding took place in the lifetime of her late husband, my friend, Captain Bouncer. It is quite an affair of honour. I assure you, sir, she has vowed to accept of none but me, Captain Thwackeray, as his successor. If you have paid your addresses to her in ignorance of this, I forgive you ; if not, we stand opposed as before."

"Oh ho ! if that be the way the land lies," replied Daniel, with a shrill whistle, "she is yours, captain, for me, and heartily welcome. I resign her unconditionally, as you military gentlemen phrase it. A great deal of trouble is spared by one's speaking out. If you had told me this, there would have been no reason for loading the pistols. May I now wish you a good morning ! 'Od save us ! but these are fearful weapons on the table ! Good morning, sir."

"Bless your heart, no," said Captain Thwackeray, evidently much relieved from his distressing situation. "Oh no, sir ; not before we breakfast together ;" and, so saying, before Daniel had a moment's time for reply, he pulled the bell violently.

"Bill, bring in breakfast for two, as expeditiously as possible—(*Exit Bill*). I knew that no man of honour, such as I know or believe you to be (your appearance bespeaks it), would act such a selfish part as deprive me of my legal right ; and I trust that this transaction shall not prevent friendly intercourse between us, if I come, as my present intention is, to take up my abode among you in this town."

"By no means," said Daniel ; "Mrs Bouncer is yours for me ; and as to matrimonials, I am otherwise provided. There are no grounds for contention, captain."

Breakfast was discussed with admirable appetite by both. The contents of the pistols were drawn, the powder carefully returned into the flask, the two bullets into the waistcoat pocket, and the instruments of destruction them-

selves deposited in a green woollen case. After cordially shaking each other by the hand, the captain saw Mr Daniel to the door, and made a very low *congé*, besides kissing his hand at parting.

The captain we leave to fight his own battles, and return to our hero, whose stoicism, notwithstanding its firmness, did not prevent him from feeling considerably on the occasion. Towards Mrs Bouncer he had not a Romeo - enthusiasm, but certainly a stronger attachment than he had ever experienced for any other of her sex. Though the case was hopeless, he did not allow himself to pine away with "a green and yellow melancholy," but reconciled himself to his fate with the more facility, as the transaction between Thwackeray and her was said to have taken place during the lifetime of her late husband, which considerably lessened her in his estimation ; having been educated a rigid Presbyterian, and holding in great abhorrence all such illustrations of military morality. "No, no," thought he ; "my loss is more apparent than real : the woman who was capable of doing such a thing, would not content herself with stopping even there. Miss Jenny Drybones is the woman for me—I am the man for *her* money." And here a thousand selfish notions crowded on his heart, and confirmed him in his determination, which he set about without delay.

There was little need of delicacy in the matter ; and Daniel went to work quite in a business-like style. He commenced operations on the offensive, offered Miss Jenny his arm, squeezed her hand, buttered her with love-phrases, ogled her out of countenance, and haunted her like a ghost. Refusal was in vain ; and after a faint, a feeble, and sham show of resistance, the damsel drew down her flag of defiance, and submitted to honourable terms of capitulation.

Ten days after Miss Jenny's surrender, their names were proclaimed in church ; and as the people stared at each other in half wonder and half good-humour, the precentor continued, after a slight pause, "There is also a purpose of marriage between Mrs Martha Bouncer, at present residing in the parish, and Augustus Thwackeray, Esq., captain of the Bengal Rangers ; whoever can produce any lawful objections against the same, he is requested to do so, time and place convenient."

Every forenoon and evening between that and the marriage-day, Daniel and his intended enjoyed a delightful *tête-à-tête* in the lady's garden, walking arm-in-arm, and talking, doubtless, of home-concerns and Elysian prospects that awaited them. The pair would have formed a fit subject for the pencil of a Hogarth,—about "to become one flesh," and so different in appearance. The lady, long-visaged and wrinkled, stiff-backed and awkward, long as a may-pole ; the bridegroom, jolly-faced like Bacchus, stumpy like an alder-tree, and round as a beer-barrel.

Ere Friday had beheld its meridian sunshine, two carriages, drawn up at the

door, the drivers with white favours and Limerick gloves, told the attentive world that Dr Redbeak had made them one flesh. Shortly after the ceremony, the happy couple drove away amid the cheering of an immense crowd of neighbours, who had planted themselves round the door to make observations on what was going on. Another coincidence worthy of remark also occurred on this auspicious day. At the same hour, had the fair widow Martha yielded up her lily-white hand to the whiskered, ferocious-looking, but gallant Captain Thwackeray ; and the carriages containing the respective marriage-parties passed one another in the street at a good round pace. The postilions, with their large flaunting ribbon-knots, huzza'd in meeting, brandishing their whips in the air, as if betokening individual victory. The captain looking out, saw Miss Jenny, in maiden pride, sitting stately beside her chosen tobacconist ; and Daniel, glancing to the left, beheld Mrs Martha blushing by the side of her moustachioed warrior. Both waved their hands in passing, and pursued their destinies.—*Janus; or, the Edinburgh Literary Almanac.*

THE HAUNTED SHIPS.

BY ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

Though my mind's not
Hoodwinked with rustic marvels, I do think
There are more things in the grove, the air,
the flood,
Yea, and the charnelled earth, than what wise
man,
Who walks so proud as if his form alone

Filled the wide temple of the universe,
Will let a frail mind say. I'd write i' the creed
O' the sagest head alive, that fearful forms,
Holy or reprobate, do page men's heels ;
That shapes, too horrid for our gaze, stand o'er
The murderer's dust, and for revenge glare up,
Even till the stars weep fire for very pity.

CHAPTER I.

ALONG the sea of Solway—romantic on the Scottish side, with its woodlands, its bays, its cliffs, and headlands ;

and interesting on the English side, with its many beautiful towns with their shadows on the water, rich pas-

tures, safe harbours, and numerous ships—there still linger many traditional stories of a maritime nature, most of them connected with superstitions singularly wild and unusual. To the curious, these tales afford a rich fund of entertainment, from the many diversities of the same story; some dry and barren, and stripped of all the embellishments of poetry; others dressed out in all the riches of a superstitious belief and haunted imagination. In this they resemble the inland traditions of the peasants; but many of the oral treasures of the Galwegian or the Cumbrian coast have the stamp of the Dane and the Norseman upon them, and claim but a remote or faint affinity with the legitimate legends of Caledonia. Something like a rude prosaic outline of several of the most noted of the northern ballads—the adventures and depredations of the old ocean kings—still lend life to the evening tale; and, among others, the story of the Haunted Ships is still popular among the maritime peasantry.

One fine harvest evening I went on board the shallop of Richard Faulder, of Allanbay, and committing ourselves to the waters, we allowed a gentle wind from the east to waft us at its pleasure towards the Scottish coast. We passed the sharp promontory of Siddick, and skirting the land within a stone-cast, glided along the shore till we came within sight of the ruined Abbey of Sweetheart. The green mountain of Criffell ascended beside us; and the bleat of the flocks from its summit, together with the winding of the evening horn of the reapers, came softened into something like music over land and sea. We pushed our shallop into a deep and wooded bay, and sat silently looking on the serene beauty of the place. The moon glimmered in her rising through the tall shafts of the pines of Caerlaverock; and the sky, with scarce a cloud, showered down on wood,

and headland, and bay, the twinkling beams of a thousand stars, rendering every object visible. The tide, too, was coming with that swift and silent swell observable when the wind is gentle; the woody curves along the land were filling with the flood, till it touched the green branches of the drooping trees; while in the centre current the roll and the plunge of a thousand pellecks told to the experienced fisherman that salmon were abundant.

As we looked, we saw an old man emerging from a path that winded to the shore through a grove of doddered hazel; he carried a halve-net on his back, while behind him came a girl bearing a small harpoon, with which the fishers are remarkably dexterous in striking their prey. The senior seated himself on a large gray stone, which overlooked the bay, laid aside his bonnet, and submitted his bosom and neck to the refreshing sea breeze; and taking his harpoon from his attendant, sat with the gravity and composure of a spirit of the flood, with his ministering nymph behind him. We pushed our shallop to the shore, and soon stood at their side.

"This is old Mark Macmoran, the mariner, with his granddaughter Barbara," said Richard Faulder, in a whisper that had something of fear in it; "he knows every creek, and cavern, and quicksand in Solway,—has seen the Spectre Hound that haunts the Isle of Man; has heard him bark, and at every bark has seen a ship sink; and he has seen, too, the Haunted Ships in full sail; and, if all tales be true, has sailed in them himself;—he's an awful person."

Though I perceived in the communication of my friend something of the superstition of the sailor, I could not help thinking that common rumour had made a happy choice in singling out old Mark to maintain her intercourse

with the invisible world. His hair, which seemed to have refused all acquaintance with the comb, hung matted upon his shoulders ; a kind of mantle, or rather blanket, pinned with a wooden skewer round his neck, fell mid-leg down, concealing all his nether garments as far as a pair of hose, darned with yarn of all conceivable colours, and a pair of shoes, patched and repaired till nothing of the original structure remained, and clasped on his feet with two massive silver buckles.

If the dress of the old man was rude and sordid, that of his granddaughter was gay, and even rich.

She wore a boddice of fine wool, wrought round the bosom with alternate leaf and lily, and a kirtle of the same fabric, which almost touching her white and delicate ankle, showed her snowy feet, so fairy-light and round that they scarcely seemed to touch the grass where she stood. Her hair—a natural ornament which woman seeks much to improve—was of a bright glossy brown, and encumbered rather than adorned with a snood, set thick with marine productions, among which the small clear pearl found in the Solway was conspicuous. Nature had not trusted to a handsome shape, and a sylph-like air, for young Barbara's influence over the heart of man ; but had bestowed a pair of large bright blue eyes, swimming in liquid light, so full of love, and gentleness, and joy, that all the sailors, from Annanwater to far St Bees, acknowledged their power, and sung songs about the bonnie lass of Mark Macmoran. She stood holding a small gaff-hook of polished steel in her hand, and seemed not dissatisfied with the glances I bestowed on her from time to time, and which I held more than requited by a single glance of those eyes which retained so many capricious hearts in subjection.

The tide, though rapidly augmenting, had not yet filled the bay at our feet.

The moon now streamed fairly over the tops of Caerlaverock pines, and showed the expanse of ocean dimpling and swelling, on which sloops and shallops came dancing, and displaying at every turn their extent of white sail against the beam of the moon. I looked on old Mark the Mariner, who, seated motionless on his gray stone, kept his eye fixed on the increasing waters with a look of seriousness and sorrow in which I saw little of the calculating spirit of a mere fisherman. Though he looked on the coming tide, his eyes seemed to dwell particularly on the black and decayed hulls of two vessels, which, half immersed in the quicksand, still addressed to every heart a tale of shipwreck and desolation. The tide wheeled and foamed around them ; and creeping inch by inch up the side, at last fairly threw its waters over the top, and a long and hollow eddy showed the resistance which the liquid element received.

The moment they were fairly buried in the water, the old man clasped his hands together, and said—

“Blessed be the tide that will break over and bury ye for ever ! Sad to mariners, and sorrowful to maids and mothers, has the time been you have choked up this deep and bonnie bay. For evil were you sent, and for evil have you continued. Every season finds from you its song of sorrow and wail, its funeral processions, and its shrouded corses. Woe to the land where the wood grew that made ye ? Cursed be the axe that hewed ye on the mountains, the bands that joined ye together, the bay that ye first swam in, and the wind that wasted ye here ! Seven times have ye put my life in peril ; three fair sons have ye swept from my side, and two bonnie grand-bairns ; and now, even now, your waters foam and flash for my destruction, did I venture my frail limbs in quest of food in your deadly bay. I see by that ripple and that foam, and

hear by the sound and singing of your surge, that ye yearn for another victim, but it shall not be me or mine."

Even as the old mariner addressed himself to the wrecked ships, a young man appeared at the southern extremity of the bay, holding his halve-net in his hand, and hastening into the current. Mark rose, and shouted, and waved him back from a place which, to a person unacquainted with the dangers of the bay, real and superstitious, seemed sufficiently perilous: his granddaughter, too, added her voice to his, and waved her white hands; but the more they strove the faster advanced the peasant, till he stood to his middle in the water, while the tide increased every moment in depth and strength. "Andrew, Andrew!" cried the young woman, in a voice quavering with emotion, "turn, turn, I tell you. O the ships, the haunted ships!" But the appearance of a fine run of fish had more influence with the peasant than the voice of bonnie Barbara, and forward he dashed, net in hand. In a moment he was borne off his feet, and mingled like foam with the water, and hurried towards the fatal eddies which whirled and reared round the sunken ships. But he was a powerful young man, and an expert swimmer: he seized on one of the projecting ribs of the nearest hulk, and clinging to it with the grasp of despair, uttered yell after yell, sustaining himself against the prodigious rush of the current.

From a sheiling of turf and straw within the pitch of a bar from the spot where we stood, came out an old woman bent with age, and leaning on a crutch. "I heard the voice of that lad Andrew Lammie; can the chield be drowning, that he skirls sae uncannily?" said the old woman, seating herself on the ground and looking earnestly at the water. "Ou ay," she continued, "he's doomed, he's doomed; heart and hand never can save him; boats, ropes, and man's

strength and wit, all vain! vain! he's doomed, he's doomed!"

By this time I had thrown myself into the shallop, followed reluctantly by Richard Faulder, over whose courage and kindness of heart superstition had great power; and with one push from the shore, and some exertion in sculling, we came within a quoit-cast of the unfortunate fisherman. He stayed not to profit by our aid; for when he perceived us near, he uttered a piercing shriek of joy, and bounded toward us through the agitated element the full length of an oar. I saw him for a second on the surface of the water; but the eddying current sucked him down; and all I ever beheld of him again was his hand held above the flood, and clutching in agony at some imaginary aid. I sat gazing in horror on the vacant sea before us; but a breathing-time before, a human being, full of youth, and strength, and hope, was there: his cries were still ringing in my ears, and echoing in the woods; and now nothing was seen or heard save the turbulent expanse of water, and the sound of its chafing on the shores. We pushed back our shallop, and resumed our station on the cliff beside the old mariner and his descendant.

"Wherefore sought ye to peril your own lives fruitlessly," said Mark, "in attempting to save the doomed? Who so touches these infernal ships never survives to tell the tale. Woe to the man who is found nigh them at midnight when the tide has subsided, and they arise in their former beauty, with fore-castle, and deck, and sail, and pennon, and shroud! Then is seen the streaming of lights along the water from their cabin windows, and then is heard the sound of mirth and the clamour of tongues and the infernal whoop and halloo, and song, ringing far and wide. Woe to the man who comes nigh them!"

To all this my companion listened with a breathless attention. I felt something touched with a superstition to

which I partly believed I had seen one victim offered up ; and I inquired of the old mariner—

“ How and when came these haunted ships there ? To me they seem but the melancholy relics of some unhappy voyagers, and much more likely to warn people to shun destruction, than entice and delude them to it .”

“ And so ,” said the old man with a smile, which had more of sorrow in it than of mirth ; “ and so , young man, these black and shattered hulks seem to the eye of the multitude. But things are not what they seem : that water, a kind and convenient servant to the wants of man, which seems so smooth, and so dimpling, and so gentle, has swallowed up a human soul even now ; and the place which it covers, so fair and so level, is a faithless quicksand out of which none escape. Things are otherwise than they seem. Had you lived as long as I have had the sorrow to live ; had you seen the storms, and braved the perils, and endured the distresses which have befallen me ; had you sat gazing out on the dreary ocean at midnight on a haunted coast ; had you seen comrade after comrade, brother after brother, and son after son, swept away by the merciless ocean from your very side ; had you seen the shapes of friends, doomed to the wave and the quicksand, appearing to you in the dreams and visions of the night ; then would your mind have been prepared for crediting the strange legends of mariners ; and the two haunted Danish ships would have had their terrors for you, as they have for all who sojourn on this coast .”

“ Of the time and cause of their destruction,” continued the old man, “ I know nothing certain ; they have stood as you have seen them for uncounted time ; and while all other ships wrecked on this unhappy coast have gone to pieces, and rotted, and sunk away in a few years, these two haunted hulks have neither sunk in the quicksand, nor has

a single spar or board been displaced. Maritime legend says, that two ships of Denmark having had permission, for a time, to work deeds of darkness and dolour on the deep, were at last condemned to the whirlpool and the sunken rock, and were wrecked in this bonnie bay, as a sign to seamen to be gentle and devout. The night when they were lost was a harvest evening of uncommon mildness and beauty : the sun had newly set ; the moon came brighter and brighter out ; and the reapers, laying their sickles at the root of the standing corn, stood on rock and bank, looking at the increasing magnitude of the waters, for sea and land were visible from St Bees to Barnhourie .”

“ The sails of the two vessels were soon seen bent for the Scottish coast ; and with a speed outrunning the swiftest ship, they approached the dangerous quicksands and headland of Borranpoint. On the deck of the foremost ship not a living soul was seen, or shape, unless something in darkness and form resembling a human shadow could be called a shape, which flitted from extremity to extremity of the ship, with the appearance of trimming the sails, and directing the vessel’s course. But the decks of its companion were crowded with human shapes ; the captain, and mate, and sailor, and cabin boy, all seemed there ; and from them the sound of mirth and minstrelsy echoed over land and water. The coast which they skirted along was one of extreme danger ; and the reapers shouted to warn them to beware of sandbank and rock ; but of this friendly counsel no notice was taken, except that a large and famished dog, which sat on the prow, answered every shout with a long, loud, and melancholy howl. The deep sandbank of Carse-thorn was expected to arrest the career of these desperate navigators ; but they passed, with the celerity of waterfowl, over an obstruction which had wrecked many pretty ships .”

"Old men shook their heads, and departed, saying, 'We have seen the fiend sailing in a bottomless ship; let us go home and pray:' but one young and wilful man said, 'Fiend! I'll warrant it's nae fiend, but douce Janet Withershins, the witch, holding a carouse with some of her Cumberland cummers, and mickle red wine will be spilt awteen them. 'Od, I would gladly have a toothfu'! I'll warrant it's name o' your cauld sour slae-water, like a bottle of Bailie Skrinkie's port, but right drap-o'-my-heart's-blood stuff, that would waken a body out of their last linen. I wonder whaur the cummers will anchor their craft?'

"'And I'll vow,' said another rustic, 'the wine they quaff is none of your visionary drink, such as a drouthy body has dished out to his lips in a dream; nor is it shadowy and unsubstantial, like the vessels they sail in, which are made out of a cockle-shell, or a cast-off slipper, or the paring of a seaman's right thumb-nail. I once got a handsel out of a witch's quaigh myself;—auld Marion Mathers of Dustiefoot, whom they tried to bury in the old kirkyard of Dunscore; but the cummer raise as fast as they laid her down, and naewhere else would she lie but in the bonnie green kirkyard of Kier, among douce and sponsible folk. So I'll vow that the wine of a witch's cup is as fell liquor as ever did a kindly turn to a poor man's heart; and be they fiends, or be they witches, if they have red wine asteer, I'll risk a droukit sark for ae glorious tout on't.'

"'Silence, ye sinners,' said the minister's son of a neighbouring parish, who united in his own person his father's lack of devotion with his mother's love of liquor. 'Whisht! Speak as if ye had the fear of something holy before ye. Let the vessels run their own way to destruction: who can stay the eastern wind, and the current of the Solway sea? I can find ye

Scripture warrant for that: so let them try their strength on Blawhooly rocks, and their might on the broad quicksand. There's a surf running there would knock the ribs together of a galley built by the imps of the pit, and commanded by the Prince of Darkness. Bonnily and bravely they sail away there; but before the blast blows by they'll be wrecked; and red wine and strong brandy will be as rife as dyke-water, and we'll drink the health of bonnie Bell Blackness out of her left foot slipper.'

"The speech of the young profligate was applauded by several of his companions, and away they flew to the bay of Blawhooly, from whence they never returned. The two vessels were observed all at once to stop in the bosom of the bay, on the spot where their hulls now appear: the mirth and the minstrelsy waxed louder than ever; and the forms of the maidens, with instruments of music and wine-cups in their hands, thronged the decks. A boat was lowered; and the same shadowy pilot who conducted the ships made it start towards the shore with the rapidity of lightning, and its head knocked against the bank where the four young men stood, who longed for the unblest drink. They leaped in with a laugh, and with a laugh were they welcomed on deck; wine cups were given to each, and as they raised them to their lips the vessels melted away beneath their feet; and one loud shriek, mingled with laughter still louder, was heard over land and water for many miles. Nothing more was heard or seen till the morning, when the crowd who came to the beach saw with fear and wonder the two Haunted Ships, such as they now seem, masts and tackle gone; nor mark, nor sign, by which their name, country, or destination, could be known, was left remaining. Such is the tradition of the mariners."

CHAPTER II.

"AND trow ye," said the old woman, who, attracted from her hut by the drowning cries of the young fisherman, had remained an auditor of the mariner's legend ; "and trow ye, Mark Macmoran, that the tale of the Haunted Ships is done ? I can say no to that. Mickle have my ears heard, but more mine eyes have witnessed since I came to dwell in this humble home by the side of the deep sea. I mind the night weel : it was on Hallow-e'en, the nuts were cracked, and the apples were eaten, and spell and charm were tried at my fireside ; till, wearied with diving into the dark waves of futurity, the lads and lasses fairly took to the more visible blessings of kind words, tender clasps, and gentle courtship.

"Soft words in a maiden's ear, and a kindly kiss o' her lip, were old world matters to me, Mark Macmoran ; though I mean not to say that I have been free of the folly of daundering and daffin' with a youth in my day, and keeping tryst with him in dark and lonely places. However, as I say, these times of enjoyment were past and gone with me ; the mair's the pity that pleasure should flee sae fast away,—and as I couldna make sport I thought I would not mar any ; so out I sauntered into the fresh cold air, and sat down behind that old oak, and looked abroad on the wide sea. I had my ain sad thoughts, ye may think, at the time ; it was in that very bay my blythe gude-man perished, with seven more in his company ; and on that very bank where ye see the waves leaping and foaming, I saw seven stately corses streeked, but the dearest was the eighth. It was a woful sight to me, a widow, with four bonnie boys, with nought to support them but these twa hands, and God's blessing, and a cow's grass. I have never liked to live out of sight of this bay since that time ; and

mony's the moonlight night I sit looking on these watery mountains, and these waste shores ; it does my heart good, whatever it may do to my head. So ye see it was Hallow-e'en ; and looking on sea and land sat I ; and my heart wandering to other thoughts soon made me forget my youthful company at hame. It might be near the howe hour of the night ; the tide was making, and its singing brought strange old-world stories with it ; and I thought on the dangers that sailors endure, the fates they meet with, and the fearful forms they see. My own blithe gude-man had seen sights that made him grave enough at times, though he aye tried to laugh them away.

"Aweel, between that very rock aneath us and the coming tide, I saw, or thought I saw (for the tale is so dream-like that the whole might pass for a vision of the night) the form of a man. His plaid was gray ; his face was gray ; and his hair, which hung low down till it nearly came to the middle of his back, was as white as the white sea-foam. He began to houk and dig under the bank ; and God be near me ! thought I, this maun be the unblessed spirit of auld Adam Gowdgowpin, the miser, who is doomed to dig for shipwrecked treasure, and count how many millions are hidden for ever from man's enjoyment. The form found something which in shape and hue seemed a left-foot slipper of brass ; so down to the tide he marched, and placing it on the water, whirled it thrice round ; and the infernal slipper dilated at every turn, till it became a bonnie barge with its sails bent, and on board leaped the form, and scudded swiftly away. He came to one of the haunted ships ; and striking it with his oar, a fair ship, with mast and canvas, and mariners, started up : he touched the other haunted ship,

and produced the like transformation ; and away the three spectre ships bounded, leaving a track of fire behind them on the billows, which was long unextinguished.

"Now wasna that a bonnie and a fearful sight to see beneath the light of the Hallowmas moon ? But the tale is far frae finished ; for mariners say that once a year, on a certain night, if ye stand on the Borranpoint, ye will see the infernal shallop coming snoring through the Solway ; ye will hear the same laugh, and song, and mirth, and minstrelsy, which our ancestors heard ; see them bound over the sand-banks and sunken rocks like sea-gulls, cast their anchor in Blawhooly Bay, while the shadowy figures lower down the boat, and augment their numbers with the four unhappy mortals to whose memory a stone stands in the kirkyard, with a sinking ship and a shoreless sea cut upon it. Then the spectre-ships vanish, and the drowning shriek of mortals and the rejoicing laugh of fiends are heard, and the old hulls are left as a memorial that the old spiritual kingdom has not departed from the earth. But I maun away and trim my little cottage fire, and make it burn and blaze up bonnie, to warm the crickets, and my cauld and crazy bones, that maun soon be laid aneath the green sod in the eerie kirkyard."

And away the old dame tottered to her cottage, secured the door on the inside, and soon the hearth-flame was seen to glimmer and gleam through the key-hole and the window.

"I'll tell ye what," said the old mariner, in a subdued tone, and with a shrewd and suspicious glance of his eye after the old sibyl, "it's a word that may not very well be uttered, but there are many mistakes made in evening stories if old Moll Moray there, where she lives, knows not mickle more than she is willing to tell of the Haunted Ships, and their unhallowed mariners. She

lives cannily and quietly ; no one knows how she is fed or supported ; but her dress is aye whole, her cottage ever smokes, and her table lacks neither of wine, white and red, nor of fowl and fish, and white bread and brown. It was a dear scoff to Jock Matheson, when he called old Moll the uncannie carline of Blawhooly : his boat ran round and round in the centre of the Solway—everybody said it was enchanted—and down it went head foremost ; and hadna Jock been a swimmer equal to a sheldrake, he would have fed the fish ; but I warrant it sobered the lad's speech, and he never reckoned himself safe till he made auld Moll the present of a new kirtle and a stone of cheese."

"O father," said his granddaughter Barbara, "ye surely wrong poor old Mary Moray : what use could it be to an old woman like her, who has no wrongs to redress, no malice to work out against mankind, and nothing to seek of enjoyment save a cannie hour and a quiet grave—what use could the fellowship of the fiends, and the communion of evil spirits, be to her ? I know Jenny Primrose puts rowan-tree above the doorhead when she sees old Mary coming ; I know the goodwife of Kittlenacket wears rowan-berry leaves in the head-band of her blue kirtle, and all for the sake of averting the unsonis glance of Mary's right ee ; and I know that the auld laird of Burntroutwater drives his seven cows to their pasture with a wand of witchtree, to keep Mary from milking them. But what has all that to do with haunted shallop, visionary mariners, and bottomless boats ? I have heard myself as pleasant a tale about the Haunted Ships and their unworldly crews as any one would wish to hear in a winter evening. It was told me by young Benjie Macharg, one summer night, sitting on Arbiglandbank ; the lad intended a sort of love-meeting, but all that he could talk of

was about smearing sheep and shearing sheep, and of the wife which the Norway elves of the Haunted Ships made for his uncle Sandie Macharg. And I shall tell ye the tale as the honest lad told it to me.

"Alexander Macharg, besides being the laird of three acres of peat-moss, two kail gardens, and the owner of seven good milch cows, a pair of horses, and six pet sheep, was the husband of one of the handsomest women in seven parishes. Many a lad sighed the day he was bridged; and a Nithsdale laird and two Annandale moorland farmers drank themselves to their last linen, as well as their last shilling, through sorrow for her loss. But married was the dame; and home she was carried, to bear rule over her home and her husband, as an honest woman should. Now ye maun ken that though flesh-and-blood lovers of Alexander's bonnie wife all ceased to love and to sue her after she became another's, there were certain admirers who did not consider their claim at all abated, or their hopes lessened, by the kirk's famous obstacle of matrimony.

"Ye have heard how the devout minister of Tinwald had a fair son carried away, and bedded against his liking to an unchristened bride, whom the elves and the fairies provided: ye have heard how the bonnie bride of the drunken laird of Soukitup was stolen by the fairies out at the back window of the bridal chamber the time the bridegroom was groping his way to the chamber door; and ye have heard—but why need I multiply cases? Such things in the ancient days were as common as candlelight. So ye'll no hinder certain water-elves and sea-fairies, who sometimes keep festival and summer mirth in these old haunted hulks, from falling in love with the weel-faured wife of Laird Macharg; and to their plots and contrivances they went, how they might accomplish to sunder man and

wife; and sundering such a man and such a wife was like sundering the green leaf from the summer, or the fragrance from the flower.

"So it fell on a time that Laird Macharg took his halve-net on his back, and his steel spear in his hand, and down to Blawhooly Bay gaed he, and into the water he went right between the two haunted hulks, and placing his net awaited the coming of the tide. The night, ye maun ken, was mirk, and the wind lown, and the singing of the increasing waters among the shells and the pebbles was heard for sundry miles. All at once lights began to glance and twinkle on board the two Haunted Ships from every hole and seam, and presently the sound as of a hatchet employed in squaring timber echoed far and wide. But if the toil of these unearthly workmen amazed the laird, how much more was his amazement increased when a sharp shrill voice called out, 'Ho! brother, what are you doing now?' A voice still shriller responded from the other haunted ship, 'I'm making a wife to Sandie Macharg.' And a loud quavering laugh running from ship to ship, and from bank to bank, told the joy they expected from their labour.

"Now the laird, besides being a devout and a God-fearing man, was shrewd and bold; and in plot and contrivance, and skill in conducting his designs, was fairly an overmatch for any dozen land elves. But the water elves are far more subtle; besides, their haunts and their dwellings being in the great deep, pursuit and detection are hopeless, if they succeed in carrying their prey to the waves. But ye shall hear.

"Home flew the laird, collected his family around the hearth, spoke of the signs and the sins of the times, and talked of mortification and prayer for averting calamity; and finally, taking from the shelf his father's Bible, brass

clasps, black print, and covered with calf-skin, he proceeded, without let or stint, to perform domestic worship. I should have told ye that he bolted and locked the door, shut up all inlet to the house, threw salt into the fire, and proceeded in every way like a man skilful in guarding against the plots of fairies and fiends. His wife looked on all this with wonder; but she saw something in her husband's looks that hindered her from intruding either question or advice, and a wise woman was she.

"Near the mid-hour of the night the rush of a horse's feet was heard, and the sound of a rider leaping from his back, and a heavy knock came to the door, accompanied by a voice, saying, 'The cummer's drink's hot, and the knave bairn is expected at Laird Laurie's to-night; sae mount, gudewife, and come.'

"'Preserve me!' said the wife of Sandie Macharg. 'that's news indeed! who could have thought it? The laird has been heirless for seventeen years. Now, Sandie, my man, fetch me my skirt and hood.'

"But he laid his arm round his wife's neck and said—

"'If all the lairds in Galloway go heirless, over this door threshold shall you not stir to-night; and I have said it, and I have sworn it: seek not to know why and wherefore,—but, Lord, send us Thy blessed moonlight!'

The wife looked for a moment in her husband's eyes, and desisted from further entreaty.

"'But let us send a civil message to the gossips, Sandie; and hadna ye better say I'm sair laid wi' a sudden sickness?—though it's sinful-like to send the poor messenger a mile agate with a lie in his mouth without a glass of brandy.'

"'To such a messenger, and to those who sent him, no apology is needed,' said the austere laird, 'so let him depart.'

"And the clatter of a horse's hoofs was heard, and the muttered impreca-

tions of its rider on the churlish treatment he had experienced.

"'Now, Sandie, my lad,' said his wife, laying an arm particularly white and round about his neck as she spoke, 'are you not a queer man and a stern? I have been your wedded wife now these three years, and, beside my dower, have brought you three as bonnie bairns as ever smiled aneath a summer sun. O man! you a douce man, and fitter to be an elder than even Willie Greer himself—I have the minister's ain word for't,—to put on these hard-hearted looks, and gang waving your arms that way, as if ye said, "I winna tak' the counsel o' sic a hempie as you." I'm your ain leal wife, and will and maun hae an explanation.'

"To all this Sandy Macharg replied, 'It is written, "Wives, obey your husbands;" but we have been stayed in our devotion, so let us pray;' and down he knelt. His wife knelt also, for she was as devout as bonnie; and beside them knelt their household, and all lights were extinguished.

"'Now this beats a',' muttered his wife to herself; 'however, I shall be obedient for a time; but if I dinna ken what all this is for before the morn by sunket-time, my tongue is nae langer a tongue, nor my hands worth wearing.'

"The voice of her husband in prayer interrupted this mental soliloquy; and ardently did he beseech to be preserved from the wiles of the fiends and the snares of Satan; 'from witches, ghosts, goblins, elves, fairies, spunkies, and water-kelpies; from the spectre shallop of Solway; from spirits visible and invisible; from the Haunted Ships and their unearthly tenants; from maritime spirits that plotted against godly men, and fell in love with their wives'—

"'Nay, but His presence be near us!' said his wife in a low tone of dismay. 'God guide my gudeman's wits! I never heard such a prayer from human lips before. But, Sandie, my man, for

Lord's sake, rise ; what fearful light is this ?—barn, and byre, and stable, maun be in a blaze ; and Hawkie and Hurley, Doddie and Cherrie, and Damson-plum, will be smoored with reek and scorched with flame.'

"And a flood of light, but not so gross as a common fire, which ascended to heaven and filled all the court before the house, amply justified the good wife's suspicions. But to the terrors of fire, Sandie was as immovable as he was to the imaginary groans of the barren wife of Laird Laurie ; and he held his wife, and threatened the weight of his right hand—and it was a heavy one—to all who ventured abroad, or even unbolted the door. The neighing and prancing of horses, and the bellowing of cows, augmented the horrors of the night ; and to any one who only heard the din, it seemed that the whole onstead was in a blaze, and horses and cattle perishing in the flame. All wiles, common or extraordinary, were put in practice to entice or force the honest farmer and his wife to open their door ; and when the like success attended every new stratagem, silence for a little while ensued, and a long, loud, and

shrilling laugh wound up the dramatic efforts of the night.

"In the morning, when Laird Macharg went to the door, he found standing against one of the pilasters a piece of black ship oak, rudely fashioned into something like a human form, and which skilful people declared would have been clothed with seeming flesh and blood, and palmed upon him by elfin adroitness for his wife, had he admitted his visitants. A synod of wise men and women sat upon the woman of timber, and she was finally ordered to be devoured by fire, and that in the open air. A fire was soon made, and into it the elfin sculpture was tossed from the prongs of two pairs of pitchforks. The blaze that rose was awful to behold ; and hissing, and burstings, and loud cracklings, and strange noises, were heard in the midst of the flame ; and when the whole sank into ashes, a drinking cup of some precious metal was found ; and this cup, fashioned no doubt by elfin skill, but rendered harmless by the purification with fire, the sons and daughters of Sandie Macharg and his wife drink out of to this day,"

A TALE OF THE MARTYRS.

BY JAMES HOGG, THE "ETTRICK SHEPHERD."

RED TAM HARKNESS came into the farm-house of Garrick, in the parish of Closeburn, one day, and began to look about for some place to hide in, when the gudewife, whose name was Jane Kilpatrick, said to him in great alarm, "What's the matter, what's the matter, Tam Harkness !"

"Hide me, or else I'm a dead man : that's the present matter, gudewife,"

said he. "But yet, when I have time—if ever I hae mair time—I have heavy news for you. For Christ's sake, hide me, Jane, for the killers are hard at hand."

Jane Kilpatrick sprung to her feet, but she was quite benumbed and powerless. She ran to one press and opened it, and then to another ; there was not room to stuff a clog into either of them.

She looked into a bed ; there was no shelter there, and her knees began to bend under her weight with terror. The voices of the troopers were by this time heard fast approaching, and Harkness had no other shift but in one moment to conceal himself behind the outer door, which was open, but the place where he stood was quite dark. He heard one of them say to another, "I fear the scoundrel is not here after all. Guard all the outhouses."

On that three or four of the troop rushed by him, and began to search the house and examine the inmates. Harkness that moment slid out without being observed, and tried to escape up a narrow glen called Kinrivah, immediately behind the house, but unluckily two troopers, who had been in another chase, there met him in the face. When he perceived them, he turned and ran to the eastward ; on which they both fired, which raised the alarm, and instantly the whole pack were after him. It was afterwards conjectured that one of the shots had wounded him, for though he, with others, had been nearly surrounded that morning, and twice waylaid, he had quite outrun the soldiers ; but now it was observed that some of them began to gain ground on him, and they still continued firing, till at length he fell into a kind of slough east from the farm-house of Locherben, where they came up to him, and ran him through with their bayonets. The spot is called Red Tam's Gutter to this day.

Jane Kilpatrick was one of the first who went to his mangled corpse—a woful sight, lying in the slough, and sore did she lament the loss of that poor and honest man. But there was more : she came to his corpse by a sort of yearning impatience to learn what was the woful news he had to communicate to her. But, alas ! the intelligence was lost, and the man to whose bosom alone it had haply been confided

was no more ; yet Jane could scarcely prevail on herself to have any fears for her own husband, for she knew him to be in perfectly safe hiding in Glen Govar ; still Tam's last words hung heavy on her mind. They were both suspected to have been at the harmless rising at Enterkin for the relief of a favourite minister, which was effected ; and that was the extent of their crime. And though it was only suspicion, four men were shot on the hills that morning without trial or examination, and their bodies forbidden Christian burial.

One of these four was John Weir of Garrick, the husband of Jane Kilpatrick, a man of great worth and honour, and universally respected. He had left his hiding-place in order to carry some intelligence to his friends, and to pray with them, but was entrapped among them and slain. Still there was no intelligence brought to his family, save the single expression that fell from the lips of Thomas Harkness in a moment of distraction. Nevertheless, Jane could not rest, but set out all the way to her sister's house in Glen Govar, in Crawford Muir, and arrived there at eleven o'clock on a Sabbath evening. The family being at prayers when she went, and the house dark, she stood still behind the hallan, and all the time was convinced that the voice of the man that prayed was the voice of her husband, John Weir. All the time that fervent prayer lasted the tears of joy ran from her eyes, and her heart beat with gratitude to her Maker as she drank into her soul every sentence of the petitions and thanksgiving. Accordingly, when worship was ended, and the candle lighted, she went forward with a light heart and joyful countenance. Her sister embraced her, though manifestly embarrassed and troubled at seeing her there at such a time. From her she flew to embrace her husband, but he stood still like a statue, and did not meet her embrace. She gazed at him—

she grew pale, and, sitting down, she covered her face with her apron. This man was one of her husband's brothers, likewise in hiding, whom she had never before seen ; but the tones of his voice, and even the devotional expressions that he used, were so like her husband's, that she mistook them for his.

All was now grief and consternation, for John Weir had not been seen or heard of there since Wednesday evening, when he had gone to warn his friends of some impending danger ; but they all tried to comfort each other as well as they could, and, in particular, by saying they were all in the Lord's hand, and it behoved Him to do with them as seemed to Him good, with many other expressions of piety and submission. But the next morning, when the two sisters were about to part, the one says to the other,—“Jane, I cannot help telling you a strange confused dream that I had just afore ye wakened me. Ye ken I put nae faith in dreams, and I dinna want you to regard it ; but it is as well for friends to tell them to anither, and then, if aught turn out like it in the course o' Providence, it may bring it to baith their minds that their spirits had been conversing with God.”

“Na, na, Aggie, I want nane o' your confused dreams. I hae other things to think o', and mony's the time and oft ye hae deaved me wi' them, an' sometimes made me angry.”

“I never bade ye believe them, Jeanie, but I likit aye to tell them to you ; and this I daresay rose out o' our conversation yestreen. But I thought I was away (ye see I dinna ken where I was) ; and I was feared and confused, thinking I had lost my way. And then I came to an auld man, an' he says to me, ‘Is it the road to heaven that you are seeking, Aggie?’ An' I said, ‘Ay,’ for I didna like to deny't.

“Then I'll tell you where you maun gang,’ said he ; ‘ye maun gang up by

the head of yon dark, mossy cleuch, an' you will find ane there that will show you the road to heaven ;’ and I said ‘Ay,’ for I didna like to refuse, although it was an uncouth looking road, and ane that I didna like to gang. But when I gaed to the cleuch-head, wha do I see sitting there but your ain gudeman, John Weir, and I thought I never saw him look sae weel ; and when I gaed close up to him, there I saw another John Weir, lying strippet to the sark, and a' bedded in blood. He was cauld dead, and his head turned to ae side, and when I saw siccán a sight, I was terrified, an' held wide aff him. But I gaed up to the living John Weir, and said to him,—‘Gudeman, how's this ?’

“‘Dinna ye see how it is, sister Aggie?’ says he, ‘I'm just set to herd this poor man that's lying here.’

“‘Then I think ye'll no hae a sair post, John,’ says I, ‘for he disna look as if he wad rin far away.’ It was very unreverend o' me to speak that gate, sister; but these were the words that I thought I said ; an' as it is but a dream, ye ken ye needna heed it.

“‘Alas, poor Aggie,’ says he, ‘ye are still in the gall o' bitterness. Look ower your right shoulder, an' ye will see what I hae to do. An' sae I looked ower my right shoulder, and there saw a hale drove o' foxes and wulcats, an' fumarts, an' martins, an' corby-craws, an' a hunder vile beasts, a' staunin' round wi' glaring een, eager to be at the corpse of the dead John Weir ; an' then I was terribly astoundit, an' I says to him, ‘Gudeman, how is this ?’

“‘I am commissioned to keep these awa,’ said he. ‘Do you think these een that are yet open to the light o' heaven, and that tongue that has to syllable the praises of a Redeemer far within yon sky, should be left to become a prey o' siccán vermin as these ?’

“‘Will it make sae vera muckle difference, John Weir,’ said I, ‘whether

the carcass is eaten up by these or by the worms?"

"Ah, Aggie, Aggie! worms are worms; but ye little wot what these are," says he. "But John Weir has warred wi' them a' his life, an' that to some purpose, and they maunna get the advantage o' him now."

"But which is the right John Weir?" said I; "for here is ane lying stiff and lappered in his blood, and another in health and strength and sound mind."

"I am the right John Weir," says he. "Did you ever think the good man o' Garrick could die! Na, na, Aggie; Clavers could only kill the body, an' that's but the poorest part o' the man. But where are you gaun this wild gate?"

"I was directed this way on my road to heaven," said I.

"Ay, an' ye were directed right, then," says he; "for this is the direct path to heaven, and there is no other."

"That is very extraordinary," says I. "And, pray, what is the name of this place, that I may direct my sister Jane, your wife, and all my friends by the same way."

"This is Faith's Hope," says he.

At the mention of this place, Jane Kilpatrick of Garrick rose slowly up to her feet, and held up both her hands. "Hold, hold, sister Aggie," cried she, "you have told enough. Was it in the head of Faith's Hope that you saw this vision of my dead husband?"

"Yes; but at the same time I saw your husband alive."

"Then I fear your dream has a double meaning," she answered; "for though it appears like a religious allegory, you do not know that there really is such a place, and that not very far from our house. I have often laughed at your dreams, sister, but this one hurries me from you to-day with a heavy and trembling heart."

Jane left Glen Govar by the break of day, and took her way through the

wild ranges of Crawford Muir, straight for the head of Faith's Hope. She had some bread in her lap, and a little Bible that she always carried with her; and without one to assist or comfort her, she went in search of her lost husband. Before she reached the head of that wild glen, the day was far spent, and the sun wearing down. The valley of Nith lay spread far below her in all its beauty, but around her there was nothing but darkness, dread, and desolation. The mist hovered on the hills, and on the skirts of the mist the ravens sailed about in circles, croaking furiously, which had a most ominous effect on the heart of poor Jane. As she advanced further up, she perceived a fox and an eagle sitting over against each other, watching something which yet they seemed terrified to approach; and right between them, in a little green hollow, surrounded by black hagsgs, she found the corpse of her husband in the same manner as described by her sister. He was stripped of his coat and vest, which it was thought he had thrown from him when flying from the soldiers, to enable him to effect his escape. He was shot through the heart with two bullets, but nothing relating to his death was ever known, whether he died praying, or was shot as he fled; but there was he found lying, bathed in his blood, in the wilderness, and none of the wild beasts of the forest had dared to touch his lifeless form.

The bitterness of death was now past with poor Jane. Her staff and shield was taken from her right hand, and laid low in death by the violence of wicked men. True, she had still a home to go to, although that home was robbed and spoiled; but she found that without him it was no home, and that where his beloved form reposed, there was the home of her rest. She washed his wounds and the stains of blood from his body, tied her napkin round his face, covered him with her

apron, and sat down and watched beside him all the livelong night, praying to the Almighty, and singing hymns and spiritual songs alternately. The next day

she warned her friends and neighbours, who went with her the following night, and buried him privately in the north-west corner of the churchyard of Morton.

THE TOWN DRUMMER.

BY JOHN GALT.

FOR many a year one Robin Boss had been town drummer ; he was a relic of some American war fencibles, and was, to say the truth of him, a divor body, with no manner of conduct, saving a very earnest endeavour to fill himself fou as often as he could get the means ; the consequence of which was, that his face was as plooky as a curran bun, and his nose as red as a partan's tae.

One afternoon there was need to send out a proclamation to abolish a practice that was growing into a custom, in some of the by-parts of the town, of keeping swine at large—ordering them to be confined in proper styes, and other suitable places. As on all occasions when the matter to be proclaimed was from the magistrates, Thomas, on this, was attended by the town-officers in their Sunday garbs, and with their halberts in their hands ; but the abominable and irreverent creature was so drunk, that he wam'let to and fro over the drum, as if there had not been a bane in his body. He was seemingly as soople and as senseless as a bolster. Still, as this was no new thing with him, it might have passed ; for James Hound, the senior officer, was in the practice, when Robin was in that state, of reading the proclamations himself. On this occasion, however, James happened to be absent on some hue and cry quest, and another of the officers (I forget which) was appointed to perform for him. Robin, accustomed to James,

no sooner heard the other man begin to read than he began to curse and swear at him as an incapable nincompoop—an impertinent term that he was much addicted to. The grammar school was at the time skailing, and the boys seeing the stramash, gathered round the officer, and yelling and shouting, encouraged Robin more and more into rebellion, till at last they worked up his corruption to such a pitch, that he took the drum from about his neck, and made it fly like a bombshell at the officer's head.

The officers behaved very well, for they dragged Robin by the lug and the horn to the tolbooth, and then came with their complaint to me. Seeing how the authorities had been set at nought, and the necessity there was of making an example, I forthwith ordered Robin to be cashiered from the service of the town ; and as so important a concern as a proclamation ought not to be delayed, I likewise, upon the spot, ordered the officers to take a lad that had been also a drummer in a marching regiment, and go with him to make the proclamation.

Nothing could be done in a more earnest and zealous public spirit than this was done by me. But habit had begot in the town a partiality for the drunken ne'er-do-well, Robin ; and this just act of mine was immediately condemned as a daring stretch of arbitrary power ; and the consequence was, that when the council met next day, some

sharp words flew among us, as to my usurping an undue authority ; and the thanks I got for my pains was the mortification to see the worthless body restored to full power and dignity, with no other reward than an admonition to behave better for the future. Now, I leave it to the unbiassed judgment of posterity to determine if any public man could be more ungraciously treated by his colleagues than I was on this occasion. But, verily, the council had their reward

The divisor Robin Boss being, as I have recorded, reinstated in office, soon began to play his old tricks. In the course of the week after the Michaelmas term at which my second provostry ended, he was so insupportably drunk that he fell head foremost into his drum, which cost the town five-and-twenty shillings for a new one—an accident that was not without some satisfaction to me ; and I trow I was not sparing in my derisive commendations on the worth of such a public officer. Nevertheless, he was still kept on, some befriending him for compassion, and others as it were to spite me.

But Robin's good behaviour did not end with breaking the drum, and costing a new one. In the course of the winter it was his custom to beat, " Go to bed, Tom," about ten o'clock at night, and the reveille at five in the morning. In one of his drunken fits he made a mistake, and instead of going his rounds as usual at ten o'clock, he had fallen asleep in a change-house, and waking about the midnight hour in the terror of some whisky dream, he seized his drum, and running into the streets, began to strike the fire-beat in the most awful manner.

It was a fine clear frosty moonlight, and the hollow sound of the drum resounded through the silent streets like thunder. In a moment everybody was afoot, and the cry of " Whaur is't? whaur's the fire?" was heard echoing from all sides.

Robin, quite unconscious that he alone was the cause of the alarm, still went along beating the dreadful summons. I heard the noise and rose ; but while I was drawing on my stockings in the chair at the bed-head, and telling Mrs Pawkie to compose herself, for our houses were all insured, I suddenly recollect that Robin had the night before neglected to go his rounds at ten o'clock as usual, and the thought came into my head that the alarm might be one of his inebriated mistakes ; so, instead of dressing myself any further, I went to the window, and looked out through the glass, without opening it, for, being in my night-clothes, I was afraid of taking cold.

The street was as throng as on a market day, and every face in the moonlight was pale with fear. Men and lads were running with their coats, and carrying their breeches in their hands ; wives and maidens were all asking questions at one another, and even lasses were fleeing to and fro, like water-nymphs with urns, having stoups and pails in their hands. There was swearing and tearing of men, hoarse with the rage of impatience, at the tolbooth, getting out the fire-engine from its stance under the stair ; and loud and terrible afar off, and over all, came the peal of alarm from drunken Robin's drum.

I could scarcely keep my composure when I beheld and heard all this, for I was soon thoroughly persuaded of the fact. At last I saw Deacon Girdwood, the chief advocate and champion of Robin, passing down the causeway like a demented man, with a red nightcap, and his big-coat on ; for some had cried that the fire was in his yard.

" Deacon," cried I, opening the window, forgetting, in the jocularity of the moment, the risk I ran from being so naked ; " whaur away sae fast, deacon?"

The deacon stopped and said, " Is't out? is't out?"

" Gang your ways home." quo' I, very

coolly, "for I hae a notion that a' this hobleshow's but the fume of a gill in your friend Robin's head."

"It's no possible!" exclaimed the deacon.

"Possible here or possible there, Mr Girdwood," quo' I, "it's ower cauld for me to stand talking wi' you here; we'll learn the rights o't in the morning, so good night;" and with that I pulled down the window. But scarcely had I done so, when a shout of

laughter came gathering up the street, and soon after poor drunken Robin was brought along by the cuff of the neck, between two of the town-officers, one of them carrying his drum. The next day he was put out of office for ever, and folk recollecting in what manner I had acted towards him before, the outcry about my arbitrary power was forgotten in the blame that was heaped upon those who had espoused Robin's cause against me.

THE AWFUL NIGHT.

BY D. M. MOIR (DELTA).

Ha!—'twas but a dream;
But then so terrible, it shakes my soul!
Cold drops of sweat hang on my trembling flesh;
My blood grows chilly, and I freeze with horror.

—Richard the Third.

The Fire-King one day rather amorous felt;
He mounted his hot copper filly;
His breeches and boots were of tin, and the belt

Was made of cast-iron, for fear it should melt
With the heat of the copper colt's belly.
Oh! then there was glitter and fire in each eye,
For two living coals were the symbols;
His teeth were calcined, and his tongue was so
dry,
It rattled against them as though you should try
To play the piano on thimbles.

—Rejected Addresses.

IN the course of a fortnight from the time I parted with Maister Glen, the Lauder carrier, limping Jamie, brought his callant to our shop door in his hand. He was a tall, slender laddie, some fourteen years old, and sore grown away from his clothes. There was something genty and delicate like about him, having a pale, sharp face, blue eyes, a nose like a hawk's, and long yellow hair hanging about his haffets, as if barbers were unco scarce cattle among the howes of the Lammermoor hills. Having a general experience of human nature, I saw that I would have something to do towards bringing him into a state of rational civilisation; but, considering his opportunities, he had been well educated, and I liked his appearance on the whole not that ill.

To divert him a while, as I did not

intend yoking him to work the first day, I sent out Benjie with him, after giving him some refreshment of bread and milk, to let him see the town and all the uncos about it. I told Benjie first to take him to the auld kirk, which is a wonderful building, steeple and aisle; and as for mason work, far before anything to be seen or heard tell of in our day; syne to Lugton brig, which is a grand affair, hanging over the river Esk and the flour-mills like a rainbow; syne to the Tolbooth, which is a terror to evil-doers, and from which the Lord preserve us all! syne to the Market, where ye'll see lamb, beef, mutton, and veal, hanging up on the cleeks, in roasting and boiling pieces—spar-rib, jiggot, shoulder, and heuk-bane, in the great prodigality of abundance; and syne down to the Duke's gate, by looking

through the bonny white painted iron-staunchels of which ye'll see the deer running beneath the green trees ; and the palace itself, in the inside of which dwells one that needs not be proud to call the king his cousin.

Brawly did I know, that it is a little after a laddie's being loosed from his mother's apron-string, and hurried from home, till the mind can make itself up to stay among fremit folk ; or that the attention can be roused to anything said or done, however simple in the uptake. So, after Benjie brought Mungo home again, gey forsaughten and wearied-out like, I bade the wife give him his four-hours, and told him he might go to his bed as soon as he liked. Jalousing also, at the same time, that creatures brought up in the country have strange notions about them with respect to supernaturals—such as ghosts, brownies, fairies, and bogles—to say nothing of witches, warlocks, and evil-spirits, I made Benjie take off his clothes and lie down beside him, as I said, to keep him warm ; but, in plain matter of fact (between friends), that the callant might sleep sounder, finding himself in a strange bed, and not very sure as to how the house stood as to the matter of a good name.

Knowing by my own common sense, and from long experience of the ways of a wicked world, that there is nothing like industry, I went to Mungo's bedside in the morning, and wakened him betimes. Indeed, I'm leein' there ; I need not call it wakening him, for Benjie told me, when he was supping his parritch out of his luggie at breakfast-time, that he never winked an eye all night, and that sometimes he heard him greetin' to himself in the dark—such and so powerful is our love of home and the force of natural affection. Howsoever, as I was saying, I took him ben the house with me down to the workshop, where I had begun to cut out a pair of nankeen trowsers for a young

lad that was to be married the week after to a servant-maid of Mr Wiggie's,—a trig quean, that afterwards made him a good wife, and the father of a numerous small family.

Speaking of nankeen, I would advise everyone, as a friend, to buy the Indian, and not the British kind, the expense of outlay being ill hained, even at six-pence a-yard—the latter not standing the washing, but making a man's legs, at a distance, look like a yellow yorline.

It behoved me now as a maister, bent on the improvement of his prentice, to commence learning Mungo some few of the mysteries of our trade ; so having showed him the way to crook his hough (example is better than precept, as James Batter observes), I taught him the plan of holding the needle ; and having fitted his middle-finger with a bottomless thimble of our own sort, I set him to sewing the cotton-lining into one leg, knowing that it was a part not very particular, and not very likely to be seen ; so that the matter was not great, whether the stitching was exactly regular, or rather in the zigzag line. As is customary with all new beginners, he made a desperate awkward hand at it, and of which I woud of course have said nothing, but that he chanced to brog his thumb, and completely soiled the whole piece of work with the stains of blood ; which, for one thing, could not wash out without being seen ; and, for another, was an unlucky omen to happen to a marriage garment.

Every man should be on his guard : this was a lesson I learned when I was in the volunteers, at the time Buonaparte was expected to land down at Dunbar. Luckily for me in this case, I had, by some foolish mistake or another, made an allowance of a half yard over and above what I found I could manage to shape on ; so I boldly made up my mind to cut out the piece altogether, it being in the back seam. In that business I trust I showed the

art of a good tradesman, having managed to do it so neatly that it could not be noticed without the narrowest inspection ; and, having the advantage of a covering by the coat flaps, had indeed no chance of being so, except on desperately windy days.

In the week succeeding that on which this unlucky mischance happened, an accident almost as bad befell, though not to me, further than that every one is bound by the ten commandments, to say nothing of his own conscience, to take a part in the afflictions that befall their door-neighbours.

When the voice of man was whisht, and all was sunk in the sound sleep of midnight, it chanced that I was busy dreaming that I was sitting, one of the spectators, looking at another play-acting business. Before coming this length, howsoever, I should by right have observed, that ere going to bed I had eaten for my supper part of a black pudding and two sausages, that widow Grassie had sent in a compliment to my wife, being a genteel woman, and mindful of her friends—so that I must have had some sort of nightmare, and not been exactly in my seven senses, else I could not have been even dreaming of siccán a place. Well, as I was saying, in the play-house I thought I was ; and all at once I heard Maister Wiggie, like one crying in the wilderness, hallooing with a loud voice through the window, bidding me flee from the snares, traps, and gin-nets of the Evil One, and from the terrors of the wrath to come. I was in a terrible funk ; and just as I was trying to rise from the seat, that seemed somehow glued to my body and would not let me, to reach down my hat, which, with its glazed cover, was hanging on a pin to one side, my face all red, and glowing like a fiery furnace, for shame of being a second time caught in deadly sin, I heard the kirk-bell jow-jowing, as if it was the last trump summoning

sinners to their long and black account ; and Maister Wiggie thrust in his arm in his desperation, in a whirlwind of passion, clauthing hold of my hand like a vice, to drag me out head foremost. Even in my sleep, howsoever, it appears that I like free-will, and ken that there are no slaves in our blessed country ; so I tried with all my might to pull against him, and gave his arm such a drive back, that he seemed to bleach over on his side, and raised a hullabaloo of a yell, that not only wakened me, but made me start upright in my bed.

For all the world such a scene ! My wife was roaring “Murder, murder !—Mansie Wauch, will ye no wauken ?—Murder, murder ! ye’ve felled me wi’ your nieve,—ye’ve felled me outright,—I’m gone for evermair,—my hale teeth are doun my throat. Will ye no wauken, Mansie Wauch ?—will ye no wauken ?—Murder, murder !—I say murder, murder, murder !”

“Who’s murdering us ?” cried I, throwing my cowl back on the pillow, and rubbing my eyes in the hurry of a tremendous fright.—“Wha’s murdering us ?—where’s the robbers ?—send for the town officer !”

“O Mansie !—O Mansie !” said Nanse, in a kind of greeting tone, “I daursay ye’ve felled me—but no matter, now I’ve gotten ye roused. Do ye no see the hale street in a breeze of flames ? Bad is the best ; we maun either be burned to death, or out of house and hall, without a rag to cover our nakedness. Where’s my son ?—where’s my dear bairn, Benjie ?”

In a most awful consternation, I jumped at this out to the middle of the floor, hearing the causeway all in an uproar of voices ; and seeing the flitcheting of the flames glancing on the houses in the opposite side of the street, all the windows of which were filled with the heads of half-naked folks in round-eared mutches or Kilmarnocks,

their mouths open, and their eyes staring with fright ; while the sound of the fire-engine, rattling through the streets like thunder, seemed like the dead cart of the plague come to hurry away the corpses of the deceased for interment in the kirkyard.

Never such a spectacle was witnessed in this world of sin and sorrow since the creation of Adam. I pulled up the window and looked out ; and, lo and behold ! the very next house to our own was all in a lowe from cellar to garret ; the burning joists hissing and crackling like mad ; and the very wind blew along as warm as if it had been out of the mouth of a baker's oven !

It was a most awful spectacle ! more by token to me, who was likely to be intimately concerned with it ; and beating my brow with my clenched nieve like a distracted creature, I saw that the labour of my whole life was likely to go for nought, and me to be a ruined man ; all the earnings of my industry being laid out on my stock-in-trade, and on the plenishing of our bit house. The darkness of the latter days came over my spirit like a vision before the prophet Isaiah ; and I could see nothing in the years to come but beggary and starvation ; myself a fallen old man, with an out-at-the-elbows coat, a greasy hat, and a bald pow, hirpling over a staff, requeeshting an awmous ; Nanse a broken-hearted beggar wife, torn down to tatters, and weeping like Rachel when she thought on better days ; and poor wee Benjie going from door to door with a meal-pock on his back.

The thought first dung me stupid, and then drove me to desperation ; and not even minding the dear wife of my bosom, that had fainted away as dead as a herring, I pulled on my trowsers like mad, and rushed out into the street, bareheaded and barefoot as the day that Lucky Bringthereout dragged me into the world.

The crowd saw in the twinkling of

an eyeball that I was a desperate man, fierce as Sir William Wallace, and not to be withstood by gentle or simple. So most of them made way for me ; they that tried to stop me finding it a bad job, being heeled over from right to left, on the broad of their backs, like flounders, without respect of age or person ; some old women that were obstrepulous being gey sore hurt, and one of them has a pain in her hainch even to this day. When I had got almost to the door-cheek of the burning house, I found one grapping me by the back like grim death ; and in looking over my shoulder, who was it but Nanse herself, that, rising up from her faint, had pursued me like a whirlwind. It was a heavy trial, but my duty to myself in the first place, and to my neighbours in the second, roused me up to withstand it ; so, making a spend like a greyhound, I left the hindside of my shirt in her grasp, like Joseph's garment in the nieve of Potiphar's wife, and up the stairs head-foremost among the flames.

Mercy keep us all ! what a sight for mortal man to glower at with his living eyes ! The bells were tolling amid the dark, like a summons from above for the parish of Dalkeith to pack off to another world ; the drums were beat-beating as if the French were coming, thousand on thousand, to kill, slay, and devour every maid and mother's son of us ; the fire-engine pump-pump-pumping like daft, showering the water like rainbows, as if the windows of heaven were opened, and the days of old Noah come back again ; and the rabble throwing the good furniture over the windows like onion peelings, where it either felled the folk below, or was dung to a thousand shivers on the causey. I cried to them for the love of goodness to make search in the beds, in case there might be any weans there, human life being still more precious than human means ; but not a living soul was seen but a cat, which, being raised and wild with the din,

would on no consideration allow itself to be catched. Jacob Dribble found that to his cost ; for right or wrong, having a drappie in his head, he swore like a trooper that he would catch her, and carry her down beneath his oxter ; so forward he weired her into a corner, crouching on his hunkers. He had much better have let it alone ; for it fuffed over his shoulder like wildfire, and, scarting his back all the way down, jumped like a lamplighter head-foremost through the flames, where, in the raging and roaring of the devouring element, its pitiful cries were soon hushed to silence for ever and ever.

At long and last, a woman's howl was heard on the street, lamenting, like Hagar over young Ishmael in the wilderness of Beersheba, and crying that her old grannie, that was a lameter, and had been bedridden for four years come the Martinmas following, was burning to a cinder in the fore-garret. My heart was like to burst within me when I heard this dismal news, remembering that I myself had once an old mother, that was now in the mools ; so I brushed up the stair like a hatter, and burst open the door of the fore-garret—for in the hurry I could not find the sneck, and did not like to stand on ceremony. I could not see my finger before me, and did not know my right hand from the left, for the smoke ; but I groped round and round, though the reek mostly cut my breath, and made me cough at no allowance, till at last I catched hold of something cold and clammy, which I gave a pull, not knowing what it was, but found out to be the old wife's nose. I cried out as loud as I was able for the poor creature to hoise herself up into my arms ; but, receiving no answer, I discovered in a moment that she was suffocated, the foul air having gone down her wrong hause ; and, though I had aye a terror at looking at, far less handling, a dead corpse, there was something brave within me at the moment,

my blood being up ; so I caught hold of her by the shoulders, and hurling her with all my might out of her bed, got her lifted on my back heads and throws in the manner of a boll of meal, and away as fast as my legs could carry me.

There was a providence in this haste; for ere I was half-way down the stair, the floor fell with a thud like thunder ; and such a combustion of soot, stour, and sparks arose, as was never seen or heard tell of in the memory of man since the day that Samson pulled over the pillars in the house of Dagon, and smoored all the mocking Philistines as flat as flounders. For the space of a minute I was as blind as a beetle, and was like to be choked for want of breath; however, as the dust began to clear up, I saw an open window, and hallooed down to the crowd for the sake of mercy to bring a ladder, to save the lives of two perishing fellow-creatures, for now my own was also in imminent jeopardy. They were long of coming, and I did not know what to do ; so thinking that the old wife, as she had not spoken, was maybe dead already, I was once determined just to let her drop down upon the street, but I knew that the so doing would have cracked every bone in her body, and the glory of my bravery would thus have been worse than lost. I persevered, therefore, though I was ready to fall down under the dead weight, she not being able to help herself, and having a deal of beef in her skin for an old woman of eighty ; but I got a lean, by squeezing her a wee between me and the wall.

I thought they would never have come, for my shoeless feet were all bruised and bleeding from the crunched lime and the splinters of broken stones ; but, at long and last, a ladder was hoisted up, and having fastened a kinch of ropes beneath her oxters, I let her slide down over the upper step, by way of a pillyshee, having the satisfaction of

seeing her safely landed in the arms of seven old wives, that were waiting with a cosey warm blanket below. Having accomplished this grand manœuvre, wherein I succeeded in saving the precious life of a woman of eighty, that had been four long years bedridden, I tripped down the steps myself like a nine-year-old, and had the pleasure, when the roof fell in, to know that I for one had done my duty ; and that, to the best of my knowledge, no living creature, except the poor cat, had perished within the jaws of the devouring element.

But bide a wee ; the work was, as yet, only half done. The fire was still roaring and raging, every puff of wind that blew through the black firmament driving the red sparks high into the air, where they died away like the tail of a comet, or the train of a sky-rocket ; the joisting crazing, cracking, and tumbling down ; and now and then the bursting cans playing flee in a hundred flinders from the chimney-heads. One would have naturally enough thought that our engine could have drowned out a fire of any kind whatsoever in half a second, scores of folks driving about with pitcherfuls of water, and scaling half of it on one another and the causey in their hurry ; but, woe's me ! it did not play puuh on the red-het stones that whizzed like iron in a smiddy trough ; so, as soon as it was darkness and smoke in one place, it was fire and fury in another.

My anxiety was great. Seeing that I had done my best for my neighbours, it behoved me now, in my turn, to try and see what I could do for myself ; so, notwithstanding the remonstrances of my friend James Batter—whom Nanse, knowing I had bare feet, had sent out to seek me, with a pair of shoon in his hand, and who, in scratching his head, mostly rugged out every hair of his wig with sheer vexation—I ran off, and mounted the ladder a second time, and

succeeded, after muckle speeling, in getting upon the top of the wall ; where, having a bucket slung up to me by means of a rope, I swashed down such showers on the top of the flames, that I soon did more good, in the space of five minutes, than the engine and the ten men, that were all in a broth of perspiration with pumping it, did the whole night over ; to say nothing of the multitude of drawers of water, men, wives, and weans, with their cuddies, leglins, pitchers, pails, and water-stoups ; having the satisfaction, in a short time, to observe everything getting as black as the crown of my hat, and the gable of my own house becoming as cool as a cucumber.

Being a man of method, and acquainted with business, I could have liked to have given a finishing stitch to my work before descending the ladder ; but, loch me ! sic a whingeing, girning, greeting, and roaring got up all of a sudden, as was never seen or heard of since Bowed Joseph* raised the meal-mob, and burned Johnnie Wilkes in effigy, and, looking down, I saw Benjie, the bairn of my own heart, and the callant Glen, my apprentice on trial, that had both been as sound as tops till this blessed moment, standing in their nightgowns and their little red cowls, rubbing their eyes, cowering with cold and fright, and making an awful uproar, crying on me to come down and not be killed. The voice of Benjie especially pierced through and through my heart, like a two-edged sword, and I could on no manner of account suffer myself to bear it any longer, as I jaloused the bairn would have gone into convulsion fits if I had not heeded him ; so, making a sign to them to be quiet, I came my ways down, taking hold of one in ilka hand, which must have been a fatherly sight to the spectators that saw us. After waiting on the crown of the causey for half-an-hour, to

* A noted Edinburgh character.

make sure that the fire was extinguished, and all tight and right, I saw the crowd scaling, and thought it best to go in too, carrying the two youngsters along with me. When I began to move off, however, siccān a cheering of the multitude got up as would have deafened a cannon ; and, though I say it myself, who should not say it, they seemed struck with a sore amazement at my heroic behaviour, following me with loud cheers, even to the threshold of my own door.

From this folk should condescend to take a lesson, seeing that, though the world is a bitter bad world, yet that good deeds are not only a reward to themselves, but call forth the applause of Jew and Gentile ; for the sweet savour of my conduct, on this memorable night, remained in my nostrils for goodness knows the length of time, many praising my brave humanity in public companies and assemblies of the people, such as strawberry ploys, council meetings, dinner parties, and so forth ; and many in private conversation at their own ingle-cheek, by way of two-handed crack ; in stage-coach confab, and in causey talk in the forenoon, before going in to take their meridians. Indeed, between friends, the business proved in the upshot of no small advantage to me, bringing to me a sowd of strange faces, by way of customers, both gentle and simple, that I verily believe had not so muckle as ever heard of my name before, and giving me many a coat to cut, and cloth to shape, that, but for my gallant behaviour on the fearsome night aforesaid, would doubtless have been cut, sewed, and shaped by other hands. Indeed, considering the great noise the thing made in the world, it is no wonder that every one was anxious to have a garment of wearing apparel made by the individual same hands that had succeeded, under Providence, in saving the precious life of an old woman of eighty, that had

been bedridden, some say, four years come Yule, and others, come Martinmas.

When we got to the ingle-side, and, barring the door, saw that all was safe, it was now three in the morning ; so we thought it by much the best way of managing, not to think of sleeping any more, but to be on the look-out—as we aye used to be when walking sentry in the volunteers—in case the flames should, by ony mischancy accident or other, happen to break out again. My wife blamed my hardihood muckle, and the rashness with which I had ventured at once to places where even masons and slaters were afraid to put foot on ; yet I saw, in the interim, that she looked on me with a prouder eye—knowing herself the helpmate of one that had courageously risked his neck, and every bone in his skin, in the cause of humanity. I saw this as plain as a pikestaff, as, with one of her kindest looks, she insisted on my putting on a better happing to screen me from the cold, and on my taking something comfortable inwardly towards the dispelling of bad consequences. So, after half a minute's stand-out, by way of refusal like, I agreed to a cupful of het-pint, as I thought it would be a thing Mungo Glen might never have had the good fortune to have tasted, and as it might operate by way of a cordial on the gallant Benjie, who kept aye smally and in a dwining way. No sooner said than done, and off Nanse brushed in a couple of hurries to make the het-pint.

After the small beer was put into the pan to boil, we found, to our great mortification, that there was no eggs in the house, and Benjie was sent out with a candle to the hen-house, to see if any of the hens had laid since gloaming, and fetch what he could get. In the middle of the meantime, I was expatiating to Mungo on what taste it would have, and how he had never seen anything finer

than it would be, when in ran Benjie, all out of breath, and his face as pale as a dish-clout.

"What's the matter, Benjie, what's the matter?" said I to him, rising up from my chair in a great hurry of a fright. "Has onybody killed ye? or is the fire broken out again? or has the French landed? or have ye seen a ghost? or are"—

"Eh, cristy!" cried Benjie, coming till his speech, "they're a' aff—cock and hens and a'; there's naething left but the rotten nest-egg in the corner!"

This was an awful dispensation. In the midst of the desolation of the fire—such is the depravity of human nature—some ne'er-do-wheels had taken ad-

vantage of my absence to break open the hen-house door; and our whole stock of poultry, the cock along with our seven hens—two of them tappit, and one muffled—were carried away bodily, stoop and roop.

On this subject, howsoever, I shall say no more, but merely observe in conclusion, that, as to our het-pint, we were obliged to make the best of a bad bargain, making up with whisky what it wanted in eggs; though our banquet could not be called altogether a merry one, the joys of our escape from the horrors of the fire being damped, as it were by a wet blanket, on account of the nefarious pillaging of our hen-house.

ROSE JAMIESON.

I looked on thy death-cold face, my lassie,—
I looked on thy death-cold face;
Thou seemed a lily new cut i' the bud,
And fading at its place.

Thy lips were ruddy and calm, my lassie,—
Thy lips were ruddy and calm;
But gane was the holy breath o' heaven,
To sing the evening psalm.—Allan Cunningham.

ANDREW JAMIESON was a thorough-paced Cameronian. He held hats in abomination, as they savoured of Erastianism; abhorred boots, because the troopers of 1685 wore them while galloping over the wilds of Dumfriesshire in quest of the persecuted remnant; testified against the use of "fanners" in the process of separating the chaff from the wheat, as a tacit renunciation of the doctrine of a superintending Providence. He judged of the excellences or defects of a sermon by its length; and on that of prayer by the colloquial familiarity which the clergyman held

with the Deity; pronounced on his orthodoxy by the complexion of his text; and listed up his voice against gowns, bands, and white pocket-handkerchiefs, as frippery belonging to the scarlet lady. Academical honours were his loathing, as he knew that, like plenary indulgences, they are, and were, to be had for money; nor would his prejudice allow him to distinguish between the man who received a D.D.-ship as the honourable reward of a life devoted to sacred literature, and him who carried it by lodging a professor's wife and daughter during the race week.

Sermons in MS., though they had been the composition of a Chalmers, and read with the classic elocution of a Thomson, appeared to him as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal ; or, in his own vernacular phrase, “in at the tae lug, and out at the tither.” ’Twas the pride of his heart to travel twenty or thirty miles on foot to hear a favourite preacher ; or to attend sacramental occasions in the air, in unfrequented districts, in imitation of the heroes of the covenant, who scorned to square their creed to the mandates of a tyrannical government ; and I verily believe that a slight touch of persecution would have added to his enjoyments in this sub-lunary sphere ; but this, as he frequently hinted, was too great a privilege to hope for from a government “neither cold nor hot.”

Andrew was a small farmer in the uplands of Nithsdale, had been prudent to a proverb in worldly matters, and consequently was rich, not only in his hopes of futurity, but in the more tangible currency of this sinful world. Frugality had been one of his most prominent characteristics ; and while many less wealthy neighbours sported broad cloth at fairs and preachings, according to his imitable countryman—

His garb was gude gray odden,
His bonnet was a broad one ;

which garb, and which bonnet, had been familiar to the frequenters of “tent preachings” for the greater part of forty years. Such was the father of Rose Jamieson, the beautiful, the meek, the modest Rose Jamieson, whose fame extended for many a mile round her father’s dwelling ; and whose fortune perhaps lent her an additional charm in the eyes of the less worthy of her suitors. Beautiful women have been so often described by master-spirits, that it would be presumptuous in me to attempt it. I entreat the reader, therefore, to place before his mind’s

eye Milton’s Eve, or Thomson’s Lavinia, or Campbell’s Gertrude, or some of the still more glorious creations of Scott or Shakspeare ; ’twill serve my purpose a thousand times better, and save me a world of trouble. Having thus briefly disposed of her bodily and mental attractions, it is needless to add that she was sought in marriage by the flower of the peasantry, and even by many above that rank in life, but shrunk from their society, as the sensitive plant shrinks from the human touch, or the sunflower when its idol withdraws to his ocean bed.

Her pursuits were of an intellectual nature. She loved literature immensely ; and though her parent was sufficiently rigid and unbending in general, relative to what he designated the “vanities,” yet he gladly supplied her with the means of gratifying her taste for books, and even condescended at intervals to direct her in the choice of their “mute friends ;” but his selections generally consisted of those tremendous folios of divinity, both doctrinal and controversial, which even yet may be seen on the shelves of our more unsophisticated peasantry ; and her masculine mind was not slow in making herself mistress of their voluminous contents.

By a careful perusal, however, of the immaculate Volume which the great Founder of Christianity left as a guide to His followers, she perceived that her father’s favourite authors did not always resemble their Divine Master in the milder virtues—such as charity, which thinketh no evil ; brotherly kindness, which is ever and anon ready to bear with an erring being ; and that humility of spirit which is ever ready to esteem another better than one’s self. As her mind got emancipated from the thraldom of the austere dogmas which had been inculcated on it from infancy, she saw a very great deal to admire, nay, to love, in the doctrines of those very persons whom

her father had branded with the name of “prelatists” and “malignants”; and hence she began to examine more closely into the merits of the controversy which raged with so much violence between persons worshipping the same God, through the mediation of the same Redeemer.

The result was, that she saw much to praise and much to blame on both sides, and she endeavoured to cover the failings of either party with the mantle of Christian love. That many of the Episcopalian clergy of that unhappy period, when the lieges were forced to attend the parish church at the point of the bayonet, disgraced their sacred profession, and brought obloquy on the holy name by which they were called, can neither be denied nor disputed. That some of them acted like incarnations of the devil, will not be controverted even in our own times, when truth, like the meridian sun, has dissipated the clouds of error and prejudice; but it is equally true, that there were men among them who adorned their profession by a walk and conversation becoming the Gospel, and who lamented in secret the evils which their circumscribed influence could not avert. Who does not revere the memory of the great and good Leighton, whose philanthropy extended to all mankind—whose whole existence was a living commentary on the great doctrine which was ever on his lips—namely, that the Founder of Christianity came to proclaim “peace on earth, good-will to men?” After the Revolution, when Presbyterianism again unfurled her banners to the mountain-breezes of our country—banners which, alas! had been wofully trampled under foot, and in defending which the best blood in Scotland had been poured out like water—the son of one of the ejected curates settled in the parish of — as a farmer, retaining, however, the religious principles in which he had been educated, and which were now

doubly dear to him in the hour of his church’s adversity.

Like his father, he was a Christian, not only in theory, but in practice; his faith was evinced, not by vague declamation, not by ultra-sanctimoniousness, but by its genuine fruits—namely, good works.

Son succeeded sire in the same district and the same principles; and it seemed that a peculiar blessing had descended on the whole race; as whatever things were lovely, or of good report, these things they did; and the promise to the meek was fulfilled them, for they literally “inherited the earth.”

Their flocks and herds were numerous; their corn and pasture fields ample;—they enlarged their borders, and, at the time this sketch commences, they mingled with the aristocracy of the county.

The youngest son of a branch of this family had studied at the University of Oxford, with a view to the Church of which his family had been such distinguished members. He was a youth not only of ardent piety, but of intense application; he fearlessly grappled with the most abstruse subjects; he divested philosophy of its jargon, and divinity of its verbosity; and nothing was so dear to his heart as when he discovered truth like a diamond amidst the heaps of rubbish which had been accumulating for ages.

But, alas! like the gentle Kirke White, while his mind was expanding and luxuriating amid the treasures of Greece and Rome, and the still more sacred stores of Palestine, his body was declining with corresponding rapidity; therefore, with attenuated frame and depressed spirits, he sought once more his native vale, to inhale health with its invigorating breezes.

Secluded from the great world, and debarred from pursuing his favourite studies, he sought the society of Rose Jamieson as an antidote to that *ennui*

which will inevitably obtrude itself on the mind amid the solitudes of a thinly peopled country. The great poet of nature has told us that the recluse may find—

Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.

And I have no doubt that the amiable and interesting student would have been sufficiently charmed with the beauties of external nature, and instructed by her eloquence, had there not been “metal more attractive” in the beautiful being who shared his walks and his friendship.

The lovely Rose Jamieson became his ministering angel ; her smile chased away the languor that brooded over his intelligent countenance ; her sweet voice quickened his sluggish pulse, and made his heart thrill with an indescribable joy—a heretofore unknown rapture ; her sunny glances diffused life, light, and gladness through his whole frame.

The golden hours on angel wing

flew over them ; the summer day became too short for them ; their walks became Eden, and their day-dreams Elysium ; they loved—fervently—mutually.

Soon as morning gleamed on the mountains, the fond pair were to be seen brushing the dew from the clover, by the banks of the romantic Nith, or climbing the daisied uplands with elastic steps and buoyant hearts—for the mountain air had already renovated the youth’s enfeebled frame, and hope had animated his spirits, and given vivacity to his conversation. They expatiated on the beauty and sublimity of the scenery around them—on the power and goodness of the Deity, displayed alike in the creation of the sun in the firmament, and the production of the myriads of wild-flowers which enamelled the green sward beneath their feet. The rushing of the mighty river to a still mightier ocean, and the diamond dew-drop hid in the petal of the half-opened

rose ; the wide-spreading and venerable oak of a century, and the lowly gowan of yesterday, afforded inexhaustible themes for discussion; and the conclusion which invariably forced itself on their attention, was that of the pious Addison—

In Reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice;
For ever singing, as they shine,
“The hand that made us is divine.”

The summer months glided over the youthful pair imperceptibly ; but with returning health, imperative duty impelled the enamoured scholar to resume his studies ; to resign the delicious society of her he loved for the musty tome, the midnight lamp, and the emulation approaching hostility, within the time-hallowed walls of Oxford. Already had his trunks been packed, the day of his departure fixed, and his adieu uttered—all but *one*.

They met for this purpose one Sabbath evening in a sequestered glen ; the larch and laburnum formed a rude arbour over them, and a nameless streamlet murmured at their feet. The stock-doves uttered mournful cadences, and the plovers over the neighbouring heath sent forth ominous wailings. The early autumnal breeze moaned through the thick foliage, and the rustle of the overhanging leaves gave a dreary response. ‘Twas a sad hour ; they vowed eternal fidelity—mingled their tears—exchanged Bibles—and parted—he to the crowded haunts of science, she to the solitude of her own little apartment, to brood over the waking dreams of bliss which sie had so lately experienced. On opening the little Bible which she had received from the hands of her lover, she found the following text written on the fly-leaf, in a tremulous hand :—“Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths,” and she could trace, moreover, certain globular stains, the cause of which was not ill to define. “Yes !” she exclaimed, while the tears

started from her large blue eyes, “ I will perform all I have vowed to thee, to the very letter. I will love thee as woman never loved—in sorrow and in sickness, in poverty and in exile—nay, in death itself I will love thee ; neither shall the influence of wealth, rank, talent, manly beauty, nor shall the authority, which preponderates more than all these together, even that of my only parent, ever alienate my affections from thee, thou chosen of my heart ! ”

At this moment the door was opened, and her father stood before her. A harsh expression pervaded his rigid countenance ; there was a stern inflexibility in his eye, and his lip quivered with emotion ; he held his staff with a convulsive grasp, and his whole frame trembled with conflicting passions.

“ Daughter,” said he, in a tremulous and hollow voice, “ daughter, I had indeed suspected that the corbie was attempting to gain the dove’s nest—that the descendant of the malignant, with malicious wile, was endeavouring to secure an interest in thine affections, and bitterly do I rue that I did not put a stop to it sooner. But little did I think that thou, the child of my love, the only daughter of thy sainted mother, whom I have cherished like the apple of mine eye, wouldest have so far forgotten thy duty as to vow love and obedience to a scion of an abjured pre-latical stock, against whom thy father and thy father’s fathers have lifted up their testimony, since the glorious carved work of the sanctuary has been defaced by their unhallowed hands. Did they not shed the blood of the saints in torrents ? Were they not butchered in the face of the sun, and in cold blood ? And did not their cries enter—but my blood curdles to enumerate the half of their enormities, and I shall therefore refrain from advertizing to branding, mutilation, fine, imprisonment, exile, and death. Daughter,” said he, in a sepulchral voice, “ thou must break off

all intercourse and connection with this young man instantly ; between us there is an impassable gulf. And if thou perseverest in thine ill-starred choice ; if thou art disobedient to thy hoary-headed father ; if thou cherish his image in thy bosom, or even at some future period, when I am gathered to my fathers, become his wife, I shall bequeath thee my malison for thy dowry, and my ban for thine inheritance.”

So saying, he flung himself out of the chamber in a paroxysm of rage. His beauteous daughter, meanwhile, had become inanimate on the couch. The usual remedies in these cases were promptly resorted to ; and after a short interval, she opened her eyes, but it was only to gaze on vacancy. The “ silver cord was loosed, and the golden bow was broken.” Her reason had fled, and never returned. In one month she was where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest. Her father, though he deemed he had only done an imperative duty, could not withstand the shock. Nature sunk beneath the unlooked-for calamity ; he mourned, and he *would not* be comforted. In a few weeks he breathed his last ; and another tenant was added to the house appointed for all living.

But who may paint the misery of the unhappy youth when he learnt the harrowing intelligence ? Sorrow is sacred, and we shall not enter into its detail. Suffice it to say, that he gave up his studies, returned to his native vale with a broken heart ; and in the words of his celebrated countryman (who no doubt had the pair in his mind’s eye when he penned the touchingly simple ballad), he is reported to have said—

Low there thou lies, my lassie,
Low there thou lies ;
A bonnier form ne’er went to the yird,
Nor frae it will arise !

There’s nought but dust now mine, lassie,
There’s nought but dust now mine ;
My soul’s with thee in the cauld, cauld grave,
And why should I stay behin’ ?

A NIGHT AT THE HERRING FISHING.

BY HUGH MILLER.

IN the latter end of August 1819, I went out to the fishing then prosecuted on Guilliam in a Cromarty boat. The evening was remarkably pleasant. A low breeze from the west scarcely ruffled the surface of the frith, which was varied in every direction by unequal stripes and patches of a dead calmness. The bay of Cromarty, burnished by the rays of the declining sun until it glowed like a sheet of molten fire, lay behind, winding in all its beauty beneath purple hills and jutting headlands; while before stretched the wide extent of the Moray Frith, speckled with fleets of boats which had lately left their several ports, and were now all sailing in one direction. The point to which they were bound was the bank of Guilliam, which, seen from betwixt the Sutors, seemed to verge on the faint blue line of the horizon; and the fleets which had already arrived on it had, to the naked eye, the appearance of a little rough-edged cloud resting on the water. As we advanced, this cloud of boats grew larger and darker; and soon after sunset, when the bank was scarcely a mile distant, it assumed the appearance of a thick leafless wood covering a low brown island.

The tide, before we left the shore, had risen high on the beach, and was now beginning to recede. Aware of this, we lowered sail several hundred yards to the south of the fishing ground; and after determining the point from whence the course of the current would drift us direct over the bank, we took down the mast, cleared the hinder part of the boat, and began to cast out the nets. Before the Inlaw appeared in the line of the Gaelic Chapel (the landmark by which the southernmost extremity of Guilliam is ascertained),

the whole drift was thrown overboard and made fast to the swing. Night came on. The sky assumed a dead and leaden hue. A low dull mist roughened the outline of the distant hills, and in some places blotted them out from the landscape. The faint breeze that had hitherto scarcely been felt now roughened the water, which was of a dark blue colour, approaching to black. The sounds which predominated were in unison with the scene. The almost measured dash of the waves against the sides of the boat and the faint rustle of the breeze were incessant; while the low dull moan of the surf breaking on the distant beach, and the short sudden cry of an aquatic fowl of the diving species, occasionally mingled with the sweet though rather monotonous notes of a Gaelic song. "It's ane o' the Gairloch fishermen," said our skipper; "puir folk, they're aye singin' an' thinkin' o' the Hielands."

Our boat, as the tides were not powerful, drifted slowly over the bank. The buoys stretched out from the bows in an unbroken line. There was no sign of fish, and the boatmen, after spreading the sail over the beams, laid themselves down on it. The scene was at the time so new to me, and, though of a somewhat melancholy cast, so pleasing, that I stayed up. A singular appearance attracted my notice. "How," said I to one of the boatmen, who a moment before had made me an offer of his greatcoat, "how do you account for that calm silvery spot on the water, which moves at such a rate in the line of our drift?" He started up. A moment after he called on the others to rise, and then replied, "That moving skeek of calm water covers a shoal of herrings. If it advances a hundred

yards farther in that direction, we shall have some employment for you." This piece of information made me regard the little patch, which, from the light it caught, and the blackness of the surrounding water, seemed a bright opening in a dark sky, with considerable interest. It moved onward with increased velocity. It came in contact with the line of the drift, and three of the buoys immediately sunk. A few minutes were suffered to elapse, and we then commenced hauling. The two strongest of the crew, as is usual, were stationed at the cork, the two others at the ground baulk. My assistance, which I readily tendered, was pronounced unnecessary, so I hung over the gunwale watching the nets as they approached the side of the boat. The three first, from the phosphoric light of the water, appeared as if bursting into flames of a pale green colour. The fourth was still brighter, and glittered through the waves while it was yet several fathoms away, reminding me of an intensely bright sheet of the aurora borealis. As it approached the side, the pale green of the phosphoric matter appeared as if mingled with large flakes of snow. It contained a body of fish. "A white horse! a white horse!" exclaimed one of the men at the cork baulk; "lend us a haul." I immediately sprung aft, laid hold on the rope, and commenced hauling. In somewhat less than half an hour we had all the nets on board, and rather more than twelve barrels of herrings.

The night had now become so dark, that we could scarcely discern the boats which lay within gunshot of our own; and we had no means of ascertaining the position of the bank except by sounding. The lead was cast, and soon after the nets shot a second time. The skipper's bottle was next produced, and a dram of whisky sent round in a tin measure containing nearly a gill. We then folded down the sail, which had

been rolled up to make way for the herrings, and were soon fast asleep.

Ten years have elapsed since I laid myself down on this couch, and I was not then so accustomed to a rough bed as I am now, when I can look back on my wanderings as a journeyman mason over a considerable part of both the Lowlands and Highlands of Scotland. About midnight I awoke quite chill, and all over sore with the hard beams and sharp rivets of the boat. Well, thought I, this is the tax I pay for my curiosity. I rose and crept softly over the sail to the bows, where I stood, and where, in the singular beauty of the scene, which was of a character as different from that I had lately witnessed as is possible to conceive, I soon lost all sense of every feeling that was not pleasure. The breeze had died into a perfect calm. The heavens were glowing with stars, and the sea, from the smoothness of the surface, appeared a second sky, as bright and starry as the other, but with this difference, that all its stars appeared comets. There seemed no line of division at the horizon, which rendered the allusion more striking. The distant hills appeared a chain of dark thundery clouds sleeping in the heavens. In short, the scene was one of the strangest I ever witnessed; and the thoughts and imaginations which it suggested were of a character as singular. I looked at the boat as it appeared in the dim light of midnight, a dark irregularly-shaped mass; I gazed on the sky of stars above, and the sky of comets below, and imagined myself in the centre of space, far removed from the earth and every other world—the solitary inhabitant of a planetary fragment. This allusion, too romantic to be lasting, was dissipated by an incident which convinced me that I had not yet left the world. A crew of south shore fishermen, either by accident or design, had shot their nets right across those of another boat, and, in disentangling them, a quarrel ensued.

Our boat lay more than half a mile from the scene of contention, but I could hear, without being particularly attentive, that on the one side there were terrible threats of violence, immediate and bloody; and on the other, threats of the still more terrible pains and penalties of the law. In a few minutes, however, the entangled nets were freed, and the roar of altercation gradually sunk into a silence as dead as that which had preceded it.

An hour before sunrise, I was somewhat disheartened to find the view on every side bounded by a dense low bank of fog, which hung over the water, while the central firmament remained blue and cloudless. The neighbouring boats appeared through the mist huge misshapen things, manned by giants. We commenced hauling, and found in one of the nets a small rock-cod and a half-starved whiting, which proved the whole of our draught. I was informed by the fishermen, that even when the shoal is thickest on the Guilliam, so close does it keep by the bank, that not a solitary herring is to be caught a gunshot from the edge on either side.

We rowed up to the other boats, few of whom had been more successful in their last haul than ourselves, and none equally so in their first. The mist prevented us from ascertaining, by known landmarks, the position of the bank, which we at length discovered in a manner that displayed much of the peculiar art of the fisherman. The depth of the water, and the nature of the bottom, showed us that it lay to the south. A faint tremulous heave of the sea, which was still calm, was the only remaining vestige of the gale which had blown from the west in the early part of the night, and this heave, together with the current, which at this stage of the flood runs in a south-western direction, served as our compass. We next premised how far our boat had drifted down the frith with

the ebb-tide, and how far she had been carried back again by the flood. We then turned her bows in the line of the current, and in rather less than half an hour were, as the lead informed us, on the eastern extremity of Guilliam, where we shot our nets for the third time.

Soon after sunrise the mist began to dissipate, and the surface of the water to appear for miles around roughened as if by a smart breeze, though there was not the slightest breath of wind at the time. "How do you account for that appearance?" said I to one of the fishermen. "Ah, lad, that is by no means so favourable a token as the one you asked me to explain last night. I had as lief see the *Bhodry-more*." "Why, what does it betoken? and what is the *Bhodry-more*?" "It betokens that the shoal have spawned, and will shortly leave the frith; for when the fish are sick and weighty they never rise to the surface in that way. But have you never heard of the *Bhodry-more*?" I replied in the negative. "Well, but you shall." "Nay," said another of the crew, "leave that for our return; do you not see the herrings playing by thousands round our nets, and not one of the buoys sinking in the water? There is not a single fish swimming so low as the upper baulks of our drift. Shall we not shorten the buoy-ropes, and take off the sinkers?" This did not meet the approbation of the others, one of whom took up a stone, and flung it in the middle of the shoal. The fish immediately disappeared from the surface for several fathoms round. "Ah, there they go!" he exclaimed; "if they go but low enough; four years ago I startled thirty barrels of light fish into my drift just by throwing a stone among them."

The whole frith at this time, so far as the eye could reach, appeared crowded with herrings; and its surface was so broken by them as to remind one of the pool of a waterfall. They leaped by

millions a few inches into the air, and sunk with a hollow plumping noise, somewhat resembling the dull rippling sound of a sudden breeze ; while to the eye there was a continual twinkling, which, while it mocked every effort that attempted to examine in detail, showed to the less curious glance like a blue robe sprinkled with silver. But it is not by such comparisons that so singular a scene is to be described so as to be felt. It was one of those which, through the living myriads of creation, testify of the infinite Creator.

About noon we hauled for the third and last time, and found nearly eight barrels of fish. I observed when hauling that the natural heat of the herring is scarcely less than that of quadrupeds or birds ; that when alive its sides are shaded by a beautiful crimson colour which it loses when dead ; and that when newly brought out of the water, it utters a sharp faint cry somewhat resembling that of a mouse. We had now twenty barrels on board. The *easterly har*, a sea-breeze so called by fishermen, which in the Moray Frith, during the summer months, and first month of autumn, commonly comes on after ten o'clock A.M., and fails at four o'clock P.M., had now set in. We hoisted our mast and sail, and were soon scudding right before it.

The story of the *Bhodry-more*, which I demanded of the skipper as soon as we had trimmed our sail, proved interesting in no common degree, and was linked with a great many others. The *Bhodry-more** is an active, mischievous fish of the whale species, which has been known to attack and even founder boats. About eight years ago, a very large one passed the town of Cromarty through the middle of the bay, and was seen by many of the townsfolks leaping out of the water in the manner of a salmon, fully to the height of a boat's mast. It appeared about thirty feet in

length. This animal may almost be regarded as the mermaid of modern times : for the fishermen deem it to have fully as much of the demon as of the fish. There have been instances of its pursuing a boat under sail for many miles, and even of its leaping over it from side to side. It appears, however, that its habits and appetites are unlike those of the shark ; and that the annoyance which it gives the fisherman is out of no desire of making him its prey, but from its predilection for amusement. It seldom meddles with a boat when at anchor, but pursues one under sail, as a kitten would a rolling ball of yarn. The large physalus whale is comparatively a dull, sluggish animal ; occasionally, however, it evinces a partiality for the amusements of the *Bhodry-more*. Our skipper said, that when on the Caithness coast, a few years before, an enormous fish of the species kept direct in the wake of his boat for more than a mile, frequently rising so near the stern as to be within reach of the boat-hook. He described the expression of its large goggle eyes as at once frightful and amusing ; and so graphic was his narrative that I could almost paint the animal stretching out for more than sixty feet behind the boat, with his black marble-looking skin and cliff-like fins. He at length grew tired of its gambols, and with a sharp fragment of rock struck it between the eyes. It sunk with a sudden plunge, and did not rise for ten minutes after, when it appeared a full mile a-stern. This narrative was but the first of I no not know how many, of a similar cast, which presented to my imagination the *Bhodry-more* whale and hun-fish in every possible point of view. The latter, a voracious formidable animal of the shark species, frequently makes great havoc among the tackle with which cod and haddock are caught. Like the shark, it throws itself on its back when in the act of seizing its prey. The fishermen frequently see it lying motion-

* Properly, perhaps, the muscular whale

less, its white belly glittering through the water, a few fathoms from the boat's side, employed in stripping off every fish from their hooks as the line is drawn over it. This formidable animal is from six to ten feet in length, and formed like the common shark.

One of the boatmen's stories, though somewhat in the Munchausen style, I shall take the liberty of relating. Two Cromarty men, many years ago, were employed on a fine calm day in angling for coal-fish and rock-cod, with rods and hand-lines. Their little skiff rode to a large oblong stone, which served for an anchor, nearly opposite a rocky spire termed the chapel, three miles south of Shandwick. Suddenly the stone was raised from the bottom with a jerk, and the boat began to move. "What can this mean!" exclaimed the elder of the men, pulling in his rod, "we have surely broken loose; but who could have

thought that there ran such a current here!" The other, a young daring fellow, John Clark by name, remarked in reply, that the apparent course of the skiff was directly contrary to that of the current. The motion, which was at first gentle, increased to a frightful velocity; the rope a-head was straitened until the very stem cracked; and the sea rose upon either bows into a furrow that nearly overtopped the gunwale. "Old man," said the young fellow, "didst thou ever see the like o' that!" "Guid save us, boy," said the other; "cut, cut the swing." "Na, na, bide a wee first, I manna skaith the rape: didst thou ever see the like o' that!"

In a few minutes, according to the story, they were dragged in this manner nearly two miles, when the motion ceased as suddenly as it had begun, and the skiff rode to the swing as before.

THE TWIN SISTERS.

BY ALEXANDER BALFOUR.

One of these men is genius to the other;
And so, of these which is the natural man,
And which the spirit? Who deciphers them?

Shakespeare.

EMMA AND EMILY GRAHAM were twin daughters of a respectable farmer and cattle-dealer in Perthshire. The girls bore such a striking resemblance to each other, that their mother found it necessary to clothe them in different colours, as the only method by which they could be distinguished. As they grew up, their similarity became, if possible, more perfect; the colour of their eyes and hair had no shade of difference; and, indeed, every feature of their faces, their form and stature, were so exactly alike, that the same distinction of different dresses continued

necessary. They had a brother, Edward, about fifteen months younger, who bore as great a likeness to both as they did to each other. When the girls arrived at nine or ten years of age, they gave promise of being rather above the ordinary stature of their sex, with a very considerable share of personal beauty. But it was only in externals that the resemblance was complete; for, although both had excellent dispositions, with a large share of good nature, their minds were in most respects dissimilar.

Emma was sedate and modest, even

to bashfulness ; while Emily was so free and lively, that many thought her forward, and her lightheartedness akin to levity. Edward's mind resembled that of his younger sister as closely as his personal appearance. She was all mirth and frolic, and, by changing clothes with her sister, amused, perplexed, and sometimes fretted her parents ; in all which Edward delighted to bear a part. At school there was an ample field for these sportive tricks ; and the teacher himself was often sadly teased by their playful metamorphoses.

When the sisters completed their seventeenth year, they had more the appearance of grown women than is common at that age ; and their resemblance still continued perfect. Their voices, although slightly masculine, were pleasant and musical ; and both had the same tone and sound, pitched to the same key. The dispositions which they had exhibited in childhood still seemed to "grow with their growth, and strengthen with their strength." In one thing they, however, agreed, which was, that whenever they appeared in public, they dressed perfectly alike, and were frequently amused and delighted with the mistakes produced by the uniformity. To distinguish their clothes, every article belonging to Emma was marked Em. G., and those of Emily with E. G. only.

As Edward grew up, his striking likeness to his sisters continued ; even their difference of voice could be distinguished only by a fine and delicate ear ; and with this close resemblance he was so highly pleased, that he used every means by which it could be preserved. To add to the perplexity of their friends, Emma would assume more than her usual vivacity, while Emily would put herself under some restraint ; although the one was apt to become suddenly grave, and the other relax into lightheartedness. But they were now divided ; for Emma went to

reside with an aunt, at fifty miles' distance, and there she continued for a considerable time.

Both the girls had been courted occasionally by the young men of their acquaintance ; but their hearts had never felt a reciprocal passion. There was, in particular, an old widower, Francis Meldrum, who had become enamoured of Emily ; and, as he was rich, her parents anxiously wished to promote the match. But their daughter shrank from it with the most decided aversion : no repulse, however, could release her from the importunity of his addresses, as he was countenanced and encouraged by her parents.

During the summer, their father was in the practice of going into England with a drove of cattle, sometimes not returning till the approach of harvest. He now departed on his usual excursion ; and, soon after, the mother was called away to visit her sick grandmother, from whom the family had considerable expectations. The farm and house were thus left under the charge of Edward and Emily, both willing to do their duty, but both thoughtless, and delighting in frolic ; which, now that they were relieved from the surveillance and remonstrances of the sedate Emma, they had a better opportunity of indulging.

There was a fair in Perth, only a few miles distant, and Emily requested her brother to accompany her thither, that they might have at least one day of pleasure. Her proposal was most readily acceded to by Edward ; and they departed together. A company of military, part of the —— regiment, were quartered in Perth, under the command of Captain Munro, who had received orders to recruit during his stay. The fair was a good opportunity for that purpose, and the Captain, with his troop, paraded the streets in their best array. From a window in the inn where they were dining, Edward and

his sister saw them pass along the street. Emily had never known what it was to love ; but she had a susceptible heart. Her hour was now come, and her lively fancy was enraptured with the fine, martial appearance of the gallant Captain. Little accustomed to reflection, she fell in love at first sight ; and unpractised in disguising her feelings, although she did not express her thoughts to her brother, she was at little pains to conceal the impression made on her heart. This he soon perceived, and began to rally her on the subject, when she frankly acknowledged that she thought the officer the most handsome-looking man she had ever seen, expressing an anxious wish to know his rank and name. That information was easily obtained by Edward, in a casual conversation with the waiter, who said he was from the same quarter with Captain Munro, who was the son and heir of a landed gentleman in Aberdeenshire, was unmarried, and a great favourite with the ladies in town. When the couple reached home, Emily's head and heart both full of the handsome Captain, they had a message from her mother, intimating that the old woman was dying, and that she could not return till she saw the result. There was also a letter from their father, requesting Edward to follow him into England with a supply of cattle, as speedily as possible.

Captain Munro had occupied Emily's sleeping and waking thoughts ; and she began to wish that an opportunity might occur for her becoming acquainted with him. With her characteristic love of frolic, she formed a plan which promised to facilitate her wishes ; and circumstances seemed favourable for its execution, but it required the assistance of her brother for carrying it into effect. It was communicated to Edward ; and he, equally rash and imprudent as herself, was prevailed upon to play his part, which was no less than to enlist

himself with Captain Munro as a recruit, and trust to his sister relieving him, according to a scheme pointed out by her, and which appeared feasible to Edward. In compliance with the plan which they had concerted, Edward, with a servant, left the farm for the cattle. Having put them on the way, and arranged to rejoin the servant, he rode into Perth, and enlisted with the Captain, receiving a shilling of earnest. Promising to come back next morning to receive his bounty, and be attested, Edward mounted his horse, and pushed forward to England, leaving Emily to settle the business as best she could.

The day when he had promised to return passed away without any appearance of the recruit. Being a fine-looking fellow, the officer was reluctant to loose him ; therefore, next morning, he despatched a serjeant, with a party, to inquire after him. On their arrival at the farm, they found only Emily and the servants. The serjeant had seen Edward when he enlisted, and now believed that he saw, in Emily, the same person in disguise ; in consequence of which he threatened to carry her before his commanding officer ; but, preserving her good humour, she held his threats in defiance, and, for his own sake, requested him to take care what he did. Some of the party had remained in the kitchen, and there learned from the servants, that Emily sometimes assumed her brother's dress ; and, they had no doubt, had personated her brother, as a joke on the Captain. Emily now regaled the party with hospitable cheer, and, dismissing them in excellent humour, requested the serjeant to make her compliments to Captain Munro, trusting that he would take better care of his next recruit. The serjeant imparted all this to his superior, together with what the soldiers had heard in the kitchen, from which the officer was persuaded, that either himself or the ser-

jeant had been completely hoaxed, and, determined to investigate the matter fully, both in discharge of his duty, and for the gratification of his curiosity, which had been highly excited, he next morning visited the farm, intending to judge for himself. This was just what Emily wished and expected. She had therefore taken care to inform herself, in a short interview with her brother, of almost every circumstance which had passed between him and the Captain, the relation of which, she trusted, would convince him of her being the recruit. The moment Captain Munro looked at her, he was convinced of her being the identical person he had enlisted, although he still had doubts about her sex ; while, at the same time, he felt that he had never seen one of his own with features so fine and delicate. Although Captain Munro was in every respect a gentleman, yet the extraordinary circumstances which had produced this interview, warranted a freedom of manner which, in other cases, he could not have employed, where he was so much a stranger. He therefore now informed Emily, that he was fully convinced of her being the person who had enlisted with him, and also quite satisfied that she now appeared in the habit which belonged to her sex ; still, he presumed he had some right to inquire her motive for a step so uncommon, and which she appeared so early to relinquish.

This question, although she had anticipated it, brought deep blushes into Emily's face ; and her heart palpitated as she replied, that, although she now regretted having adopted a measure so incompatible with female delicacy, she felt it a duty which she owed to herself, to inform him of her inducement, lest it might be attributed to something still more unbecoming. She then went on to state that she had, for a long time past, been persecuted with the odious

addresses of a widower, old enough to be her father, and whom her parents wished her to marry because he was rich ; but, although he had been her equal in age, their dispositions were so opposite, that she must have despised him, for he was a miserly, stingy, jealous, and contemptible wretch ; and she had availed herself of the absence of her parents to adopt a measure which, she was sure, would, on its coming to his knowledge, have the effect of relieving her from his offensive importunities ; and, although she now saw the imprudent folly she had committed, her regret would be diminished, if it produced the consequences she so anxiously wished.

The part she was now acting, and the situation in which she had placed herself, in spite of all Emily's natural forwardness, called forth that modest timidity which still adds to the loveliness of a young and beautiful woman, suffusing her cheeks with crimson, and softening the brightness of her sparkling eye. Altogether, her appearance and behaviour made a powerful impression on the heart of the gallant soldier ; and he contrived to protract the interview till the latest period that good breeding permitted. When Emily offered to return the shilling which her brother had received, the Captain refused it, saying, with a smile, that he had not yet renounced his claim on her, but reserved it for further investigation, for the discussion of which he proposed repeating his visit.

With self-possession, but becoming modesty, Emily replied, that although she had already overstepped the bounds of female decorum, she was neither ignorant of, nor indifferent to, that propriety of conduct which her situation required ; and would therefore request, that if he was again inclined to visit the farm of Greenbrae, it might be after the return of her parents. The Captain now left Emily, nearly as much fascinated with her as she had been with his

first appearance ; while the respectful propriety of his behaviour, in a case where some freedom of speech might have been excusable, raised him in her estimation ; and she flattered herself that he had not seen her with indifference.

The Captain was now impatient for the return of her parents ; as, afraid of incurring the displeasure of Emily, he could not venture to visit Greenbraes till that time ; but he, oftener than once, threw himself in the way by walking in the vicinity, hoping to meet her whom he now found it impossible to forget. Emily had seen him sauntering in the fields, and rightly conjectured his purpose ; but she, actuated, no doubt, partly by a little coquetry, had uniformly disappointed him.

Her father now returned from England ; and Emily, who had never before disguised her actions, convinced that her parent must soon hear, from some officious friend, what had already made much noise in the place, resolved to tell as much of the truth as suited her purpose. She therefore informed her father that Edward, in a frolic, had enlisted ; but that she had sent him out of the way, and represented him when the Captain came to claim his recruit, and that officer had laughed heartily at the joke.

"Ah, Emily ! you are a light-hearted, and lighter-headed lassie," said the fond father. " You carry things ower far ; and I'm fleyed ye'll tine your ain character, or render it no worth the keeping. What will Francie Meldrum say to that business ? I'll think shame to see him."

"My dear father, if naebody's angry but Francie, I'll never rue doing that for my brother. Say that *you're* no angry, father, and set my heart at ease." And, looking in her father's face with a timid, but affectionate smile, she laid her arm around his neck, pressing her glowing lip to his bronzed cheek.

"I am angry, you little flattering gipsey ; but promise to gie ower thaе light-headed pranks, and I'll forgive you for this."

Emily had reason to congratulate herself on this speedy reconciliation with her father, who she saw was in good humour ; for, looking from the window, she saw Francis, the object of her detestation, approaching, although he had never tormented her during the absence of her parents. Leaving her father to receive the unwelcome visitor, Emily secreted herself in an adjoining closet, where she could hear every word of the conversation, which soon became more agreeable to her than she had expected ; for Francis began to speak of her frolic with an asperity which her father did not think it merited. They came to high words, the result of which was, that the farmer conducted his guest to the door, requesting him never to enter it again till Emily bade him welcome. This was so far beyond Emily's expectations, that her heart bounded with delight ; and, had it not been that she must have betrayed her being a listener, she would have rushed in, and, kneeling to her father, thanked him for the deliverance.

The fact was, that her father, on his return from England, had stayed in Perth to deposit some money with his banker, who insisted on his dining with him, as he was to see a few friends that day. Captain Munro happened to be of the party, and, hearing the farmer's name and residence, endeavoured to make himself as agreeable as possible, in which he succeeded admirably. Before parting, he took an opportunity of having a private conversation with the farmer, relating circumstantially what the reader is already acquainted with, as far as consisted with his own knowledge. He concluded by confessing the impression which Emily had made on him, which all that he had since heard concerning her had contri-

buted to deepen ; and that her motive for the frolic which had given him the pleasure of knowing her was a sufficient apology ; and, as it was obvious she would never consent to marry the widower, he begged the farmer to sanction his addresses, instead of a man whose age certainly rendered the match very unsuitable. For his own character and family he referred him to the banker, under whose roof they were, requesting the pleasure of another interview before he left town.

The honest farmer was rather vexed at the first part of this relation, but the conclusion put him in good humour ; and, in a conversation with the banker, he learned that Captain Munro was the son and heir of a landed gentleman in Aberdeenshire, and that the young officer bore a highly respectable character, both as a man and a soldier. The farmer and Captain again met, when the former gave the officer his hearty permission to address his daughter, adding, that as she had several times perplexed him with her harmless tricks, of which the Captain had seen and felt a specimen, he wished this interview to be kept secret, and, when they met at Greenbraes, that they might appear strangers to each other. The Captain approved of the suggestion, esteeming it a good joke ; and they parted, both in high spirits.

Emily was highly delighted with the dismissal of the importunate widower ; and, just as she was wondering whether the Captain knew that her father had returned, she, one morning, saw him approaching the house.

Although this was by no means a disagreeable discovery, yet, when commanded by her father to join them in the parlour, she entered with a palpitating heart, and her cheeks blushing like a half-blown rose.

The Captain met her with the respectful ease of a gentleman and an old acquaintance, when her father, in rather

a severe tone, said, "Emily, you informed me of a joke which you played off upon this gentleman, and gave me to understand it was all settled and forgotten ; but I find that is not the case. Captain Munro insists that you received earnest money from him, which you still retain ; and, therefore, he is entitled either to your services, or satisfaction for the insult offered to him. What do you say ?"

"When Captain Munro explains what he wants, I shall then know how to answer," replied Emily.

"That is easily done, Miss Graham," replied the Captain. "You engaged to be a soldier for life, and I claim the fulfilment of your agreement—wish you to follow the drum. In a word, dear Emily, I love you, and wish to make you a soldier's wife. When I last had the pleasure of seeing you, I informed you that I reserved my claim for further discussion, and requested permission to visit you, which you very prudently declined till your father's return. He is now present, and I wait your reply. A soldier hates trifling."

"My first engagement with you, Captain, was rash, and I repented," replied Emily. "I am afraid you have imitated my folly, in the present declaration, which you would probably regret on reflection. I shall take time to deliberate ; and, when we both know each other better, if you continue in the same mind, I shall then be prepared to reply."

This response, while it did credit to Emily's prudence, was such as gave the suitor every reasonable hope of success ; as the expression, "when we know each other better," was sufficiently encouraging to induce him to continue his visits. Love had already done his work with both hearts, and in a short time they perfectly understood each other.

Emily's mother now returned ; and, after the necessary preparations, the

wedding-day was appointed, when the Captain was called to Edinburgh, as member of a court-martial, to be held in the Castle. They had known each other but a short time, and both had been so much engrossed with their own affairs, that, although the Captain had heard Emma's name mentioned, he was ignorant of the striking resemblance which she bore to her sister. Emily had also continued unacquainted with the Captain's first interview with her father, till she happened to overhear the latter relating it to her mother, and chuckling over it as a good joke which he and the Captain had played off on Emily. Although not displeased at the imposition practised on her, she resolved, sooner or later, to pay both her father and lover in their own coin ; and her fertile invention soon contrived a scheme, in which, if she could engage her sister as a confederate, she trusted to enjoy the pleasure of full retaliation.

A letter had been despatched to Emma, announcing the intended nuptials, and requesting her presence, to officiate as bride's maid on the occasion. This message had, however, been crossed on the road by another from Emma, to the same tune ; informing her parents of her intended marriage, two days before that fixed for Emily's wedding, and requesting the same service of her sister which had been expected from her.

This *contretemps* was a disappointment to both ; however, a second letter arrived from Emma, congratulating Emily on the approaching event, and intimating that she and her husband intended doing themselves the pleasure of being with them in time to witness the ceremony.

The absence of some important witnesses in the case before the court-martial had prevented its sitting ; and a letter arrived from Captain Munro, intimating, that, however much it vexed him, he found it would be impossible

for him to be at Greenbraes sooner than the day appointed for their union ; and, even then, the hour of his arrival was uncertain, but he hoped to be in time for dinner.

Edward arrived from England on the eve of the wedding-day ; and Emma, with her husband, in the morning. After the mutual congratulations among so many friends, Emily took an early opportunity of communicating her intentions, and requesting their assistance ; especially as it was the last opportunity she would have of indulging in frolic ; as, in a few hours, she should be sworn to love, honour, and obey her husband. Edward was highly delighted with the scheme ; and Emma's husband, who loved a joke, prevailed on her to comply with her sister's request, and perform her share in the plot, as explained by Emily ; and the striking likeness of the two sisters being still as strong as ever, rendered success almost certain. As a necessary preliminary, it was agreed that the sisters should be dressed exactly alike, in every, the minutest article, except that Emma should wear a *bandeau* of artificial rosebuds, by which she could be at once distinguished from her sister. All this was carried into effect ; and, when dressed, the distinction was pointed out to their parents, to prevent, as they said, any ridiculous mistake at the approaching ceremony.

The farmhouse of Greenbraes had, in former times, been the mansion-house of the estate, and still had attached to it an extensive and old-fashioned garden. The house stood on a rising ground, and had a commanding view of the road by which the bridegroom must approach. Emily had every thing ready ; and, when she saw him at some distance, she joined her brother, with Emma and her husband, in the garden, where they had been for some time ; but, as she passed out, requested her mother to conduct Captain Munro to the garden, on his arrival, contriving

some excuse for leaving him as he entered, as she wished to see him privately.

The party had disposed themselves in order, waiting his approach ; and, when they heard the garden-door open, Edward and Emily withdrew, secreting themselves in a thicket of evergreens ; and the Captain entering, beheld Emma and her husband sauntering most lovingly, at a little distance before him. They did not seem to observe the bridegroom ; but, on turning the corner of a new-clipped yew-hedge, Emma, as if by accident, dropped her handkerchief, and the next moment they were out of sight. Captain Munro believed at first glance that it was Emily he had seen, but still was reluctant to suppose it possible that she would permit any other man to use the freedom he had just witnessed ; and endeavoured to persuade himself that the lady must be a stranger, invited to the wedding. However, the handkerchief seemed a probable clue to solve his doubts ; he approached, took it up, and found it marked Em. G. In no very pleasant mood, he stepped forward a little farther, when he heard a soft whisper, which he knew proceeded from a rustic bower ; and he was aware that, by a slight circuit, he could discover the occupants without being seen. He now saw, as he believed, Emily seated in the bower, her head leaning on the shoulder of a handsome-looking young man, whose arm encircled her waist. Rage and jealousy now took possession of the bridegroom's soul, and he was at first disposed to leave the farm, without speaking to any one, but, standing for a few minutes in a stupor, he determined to see the face of him for whom he had been so cruelly deceived. He therefore walked up in front of the bower, and, with all the calm respect which he could assume, said, "Madam, permit me to present your handkerchief, which you dropped in the walk."

"I thank you, Sir," replied Emma ;

"may I inquire to whom I am indebted for restoring it to its owner ?"

The cool composure with which this question was put, raised the indignation of the maddened bridegroom to its highest pitch ; and, with a glance of the most sovereign contempt which he could assume, he replied, "To one, madam, who despises you from his soul, and thanks God for his timely discovery of your infamy !"

Her husband now started to his feet, and said, "Sir, you bear the insignia, although you want the manners of a gentleman. But were you of the blood-royal, you should not insult my wife with impunity."

Captain Munro started at the word, and repeated, "Wife ! did you say, Sir ? Permit me to ask one question, to which your candid reply will oblige me. How long has that woman been your wife ?"

"For these two days."

"Enough. Farewell for ever ! infamous woman !"

Edward now sprung from the thicket, and standing right before the Captain, in the exact costume in which he had enlisted, said, with an arch and good-humoured smile, "My honoured Captain, excuse the freedom of your recruit. I cannot patiently hear those opprobrious epithets applied to my sister ; perhaps she could explain all this if you had patience."

The Captain was now fairly bewildered, and stood staring, first at the one, and then the other, in half-frantic amazement, when, to his relief, the farmer approached ; and, seeing the four looking in gloomy silence on each other, exclaimed, "Why, what is the matter with all of you, that you stare as if bewitched ?"

Captain Munro, recovering himself a little, replied, "It is even so, Sir ; and you are come in time to remove the spell. Say, who are these before you ?"

The farmer surveyed the group, and

observing that Emma had not the *bandeau* of rose-buds by which she was to be distinguished from her sister, replied : " Captain, what do you mean ? The young man is my son Edward ; the other is Dr Malcolm, my son-in-law : you surely do not require to be told that the female is *my* daughter, and *your* bride."

" She is no bride of mine—I renounce her for ever ! " said the angry soldier, in a most indignant tone.

While the farmer stood, as much amazed as the Captain had been, Emily came forward from the thicket, and, standing close beside her sister, said, " Dear father, let not the gentlemen quarrel ; you have certainly a daughter for each of them ; and as both of us are quite willing to have husbands, have the goodness to give our hands to those

for whom you intend us ; " and both sisters stood with the stillness, gravity, and silence of statues. The astonished father found the distinguishing badge wanting in both, and replied, " I must confess I am fairly bewildered ; gentlemen, choose for yourselves, for I cannot ! "

Edward now put on Emily's playful smile, and looked at the Captain in a manner which made him at once clasp the youth in his arms, crying, " My dear Emily ! I know you now."

The loud laughter of the party again renewed the confusion of the bridegroom and farmer, which was enjoyed for a considerable time before they condescended to give any explanation. It was, however, at last made ; all was set right, and the evening passed at Greenbraes in hilarity and unclouded happiness.

ALBERT BANE:

AN INCIDENT OF THE BATTLE OF CULLODEN.

BY HENRY MACKENZIE.

WHEN I was, last autumn, at my friend Colonel Caustic's in the country, I saw there, on a visit to Miss Caustic, a young gentleman and his sister, children of a neighbour of the Colonel's, with whose appearance and manner I was particularly pleased.

The history of their parents, said my friend, is somewhat particular, and I love to tell it, as I do everything that is to the honour of our nature. Man is so poor a thing, taken in the gross, that when I meet with an instance of nobleness in detail, I am fain to rest upon it long, and to recall it often, as in coming thither over our barren hills you would look with double delight on a spot of cultivation or of beauty.

The father of those young folks,

whose looks you were struck with, was a gentleman of considerable domains and extensive influence on the northern frontier of our country. In his youth he lived, as it was then more the fashion than it is now, at the seat of his ancestors, surrounded with Gothic grandeur, and compassed with feudal followers and dependants, all of whom could trace their connection at a period more or less remote with the family of their chief. Every domestic in his house bore the family-name, and looked on himself as in a certain degree partaking its dignity, and sharing its fortunes. Of these, one was in a particular manner the favourite of his master. Albert Bane (the surname, you know, is generally lost in a name descriptive of

the individual) had been his companion from his infancy. Of an age so much more advanced as to enable him to be a sort of tutor to his youthful lord, Albert had early taught him the rural exercises and rural amusements, in which himself was eminently skilful ; he had attended him in the course of his education at home, of his travels abroad, and was still the constant companion of his excursions, and the associate of his sports.

On one of those latter occasions, a favourite dog of Albert's, whom he had trained himself, and of whose qualities he was proud, happened to mar the sport which his master expected, who, irritated at the disappointment, and having his gun ready cocked in his hand, fired at the animal, which, however, in the hurry of his resentment, he missed. Albert, to whom Oscar was a child, remonstrated against the rashness of the deed in a manner rather too warm for his master, ruffled as he was with the accident, and conscious of being in the wrong, to bear. In his passion he struck his faithful attendant, who suffered the indignity in silence : and retiring, rather in grief than in anger, left his native country that very night ; and when he reached the nearest town, enlisted with a recruiting party of a regiment then on foreign service. It was in the beginning of the war with France, which broke out in 1744, rendered remarkable for the rebellion which the policy of the French court excited, in which some of the first families of the Highlands were unfortunately engaged. Among those who joined the standard of Charles, was the master of Albert.

After the battle of Culloden, so fatal to that party, this gentleman, along with others who had escaped the slaughter of the field, sheltered themselves from the rage of the unsparing soldiery among the distant recesses of their country. To him his native

mountains offered an asylum ; and thither he naturally fled for protection. Acquainted, in the pursuits of the chase, with every secret path and unworn track, he lived for a considerable time, like the deer of his forest, close hid all day, and only venturing down at the fall of evening, to obtain from some of his cottagers, whose fidelity he could trust, a scanty and precarious support. I have often heard him (for he is one of my oldest acquaintances) describe the scene of his hiding-place, at a later period, when he could recollect it in its sublimity, without its horror. "At times," said he, "when I ventured to the edge of the wood, among some of those inaccessible crags which you remember a few miles from my house, I have heard, in the pauses of the breeze which rolled solemn through the pines beneath me, the distant voices of the soldiers, shouting in answer to one another amidst their inhuman search. I have heard their shouts re-echoed from cliff to cliff, and seen reflected from the deep still lake below the gleam of those fires which consumed the cottages of my people. Sometimes shame and indignation wellnigh overcame my fear, and I have prepared to rush down the steep, unarmed as I was, and to die at once by the swords of my enemies ; but the instinctive love of life prevailed, and starting, as the roe bounded by me, I have again shrunk back to the shelter I had left.

"One day," continued he, "the noise was nearer than usual ; and at last, from the cave in which I lay, I heard the parties immediately below so close upon me, that I could distinguish the words they spoke. After some time of horrible suspense, the voices grew weaker and more distant ; and at last I heard them die away at the further end of the wood. I rose and stole to the mouth of the cave, when suddenly a dog met me, and gave that short quick bark by which they indicate their prey. Amidst the terror of the circumstance, I was yet

master enough of myself to discover that the dog was Oscar ; and I own to you I felt his appearance like the retribution of justice and of heaven. ‘Stand !’ cried a threatening voice, and a soldier pressed through the thicket, with his bayonet charged. It was Albert ! Shame, confusion, and remorse stopped my utterance, and I stood motionless before him. ‘My master !’ said he, with the stifled voice of wonder and of fear, and threw himself at my feet. I had recovered my recollection. You are revenged, said I, and I am your prisoner. ‘Revenged ! Alas ! you have judged too harshly of me ; I have not had one happy day since that fatal one on which I left my master ; but I have lived, I hope, to save him. The party to which I belong are passed ; for I lingered behind them among those woods and rocks, which I remember so well in happier days. There is, however, no time to be lost. In a few hours this wood will blaze, though they do not suspect that it shelters you. Take my dress, which may help your escape, and I will endeavour to dispose of yours. On the coast, to the westward, we have learned there is a small party of your friends, which, by following the river’s track till dusk, and then striking over the shoulder of the hill, you may join without much danger of discovery.’ I felt the disgrace of owing so much to him I had injured, and remonstrated against exposing him to such imminent danger of its being known that he favoured my escape, which, from the temper of his commander, I knew would be instant death. Albert, in an agony of fear and distress, besought me to think only of my own safety. ‘Save us both,’ said he, ‘for if you die, I cannot live.

Perhaps we may meet again ; but whatever comes of Albert, may the blessing of God be with his master !’”

Albert’s prayer was heard. His master, by the exercise of talents which, though he had always possessed, adversity only taught him to use, acquired abroad a station of equal honour and emolument ; and when the proscriptions of party had ceased, returned home to his own country, where he found Albert advanced to the rank of a lieutenant in the army, to which his valour and merit had raised him, married to a lady, by whom he had got some little fortune, and the father of an only daughter, for whom nature had done much, and to whose native endowments it was the chief study and delight of her parents to add everything that art could bestow. The gratitude of the chief was only equalled by the happiness of his follower, whose honest pride was not long after gratified by his daughter becoming the wife of that master whom his generous fidelity had saved. That master, by the clemency of more indulgent and liberal times, was again restored to the domains of his ancestors, and had the satisfaction of seeing the grandson of Albert enjoy the hereditary birthright of his race. I accompanied Colonel Caustic on a visit to this gentleman’s house, and was delighted to observe his grateful attention to his father-in-law, as well as the unassuming happiness of the good old man, conscious of the perfect reward which his former fidelity had met with. Nor did it escape my notice, that the sweet boy and girl, who had been our guests at the Colonel’s, had a favourite brown and white spaniel, whom they caressed much after dinner, whose name was Oscar.

THE PENNY-WEDDING.

BY ALEX. CAMPBELL.

IF any of our readers have ever seen a Scottish penny-wedding, they will agree with us, we daresay, that it is a very merry affair, and that its mirth and hilarity is not a whit the worse for its being, as it generally is, very homely and unsophisticated. The penny-wedding is not quite so splendid an affair as a ball at Almack's; but, from all we have heard and read of these aristocratic exhibitions, we for our own parts would have little hesitation about our preference, and what is more, we are quite willing to accept the imputation of having a horrid bad taste.

It is very well known to those who know anything at all of penny-weddings, that, when a farmer's servant is about to be married—such an occurrence being the usual, or, at least, the most frequent occasion of these festivities—all the neighbouring farmers, with their servants, and sometimes their sons and daughters, are invited to the ceremony; and to those who know this, it is also known that the farmers so invited are in the habit of contributing each something to the general stock of good things provided for the entertainment of the wedding guests — some sending one thing and some another, till materials are accumulated for a feast, which, both for quantity and quality, would extort praise from Dr Kitchener himself, than whom no man ever knew better what good living was. To all this a little money is added by the parties present, to enable the young couple to *plenish* their little domicile.

Having given this brief sketch of what is called a penny-wedding, we proceed to say that such a merry doing as this took place, as it had done a thousand times before, in a certain

parish (we dare not be more particular) in the south of Scotland, about five-and-twenty years ago. The parties—we name them, although it is of no consequence to our story — were Andrew Jardine and Margaret Laird, both servants to a respectable farmer in that part of the country of the name of Harrison, and both very deserving and well-doing persons.

On the wedding-day being fixed, Andrew went himself to engage the services of blind Willie Hodge, the parish fiddler, as he might with all propriety be called, for the happy occasion ; and Willie very readily agreed to attend gratuitously, adding, that he would bring his best fiddle along with him, together with an ample supply of fiddle-strings and rosin.

"An' a wee bit box o' elbow grease, Willie," said Andrew, slyly ; "for ye'll haegude aught hours o't, at the very least." "I'll be sure to bring that too, Andrew," replied Willie, laughing ; "but it's no aught hours that'll ding me, I warrant. I hae played sixteen without stoppin, except to rosit."

"And to weet your whistle," slipped in Andrew.

"Pho, that wasna worth coontin. It was just a mouthfu' and at it again," said Willie. "I just tak, Andrew," he went on, "precisely the time o' a demisemiquaver to a tumbler o' cauld liquor, such as porter or ale ; and twa minims or four crochets to a tumbler o' het drink, such as toddy ; for the first, ye see, I can tak aff at jig time, but the other can only get through wi' at the rate o' 'Roslin Castle,' or the 'Dead March in Saul,' especially when its brought to me scadding het, whilk sude never be done to a fiddler."

Now, as to this very nice chromatic measurement by Willie, of the time consumed in his potations, while in the exercise of his calling, we have nothing to say. It may be perfectly correct for aught we know; but when Willie said that he played at one sitting, and with only the stoppages he mentioned, for sixteen hours, we rather think he was drawing fully a longer bow than that he usually played with. At all events, this we know, that Willie was a very indifferent, if not positively a very bad fiddler; but he was a good-humoured creature, harmless and inoffensive, and, moreover, the only one of his calling in the parish, so that he was fully as much indebted to the necessities of his customers for the employment he obtained, as to their love or charity.

The happy day which was to see the humble destinies of Andrew Jardine and Margaret Laird united having arrived, Willie attired himself in his best, popped his best fiddle—which was, after all, but a very sober article, having no more tone than a salt-box—into a green bag, slipped the instrument thus secured beneath the back of his coat, and proceeded towards the scene of his impending labours. This was a large barn, which had been carefully swept and levelled for the “light fantastic toes” of some score of ploughmen and dairy-maids, not formed exactly after the Chinese fashion. At the further end of the barn stood a sort of platform, erected on a couple of empty herring-barrels; and on this again a chair was placed. This distinguished situation, we need hardly say, was designed for Willie, who from that elevated position was to pour down his heel-inspiring strains amongst the revellers below. When Willie, however, came first upon the ground, the marriage party had not yet arrived. They were still at the manse, which was hard by, but were every minute expected. In these circumstances, and it being a fine summer

afternoon, Willie seated himself on a stone at the door, drew forth his fiddle, and struck up with great vigour and animation, to the infinite delight of some half-dozen of the wedding guests, who, not having gone with the others to the manse, were now, like himself, waiting their arrival. These immediately commenced footing it to Willie’s music on the green before the door, and thus presented a very appropriate prelude to the coming festivities of the evening.

While Willie was thus engaged, an itinerant brother in trade, on the lookout for employment, and who had heard of the wedding, suddenly appeared, and stealing up quietly beside him, modestly undid the mouth of his fiddle-bag, laid the neck of the instrument bare, and drew his thumb carelessly across the strings, to intimate to him that a rival was near his throne. On hearing the sound of the instrument, Willie stopped short.

“I doubt, frien, ye hae come to the wrang market,” he said, guessing at once the object of the stranger. “An’ ye hae been travellin too, I daresay?” he continued, good-naturedly, and not at all offended with the intruder, for whom and all of his kind he entertained a fellow feeling.

“Ay,” replied the new Orpheus, who was a tall, good-looking man of about eight-and-twenty years of age, but very poorly attired, “I hae been travellin, as ye say, neebor, an’ hae came twa or three miles out o’ my way to see if I could pick up a shilling or twa at this weddin.”

“I am sorry now, man, for that,” said Willie, sympathisingly. “I doot ye’ll be disappointed, for I hae been engaged for’t this fortnight past. But I’ll tell ye what: if ye’re onything guid o’ the fiddle, ye may remain, jist to relieve me now an’ then, an’ I’ll mind ye when a’s ower; an’ at ony rate ye’ll aye pick up a mouthfu’ o’ guid meat and

drink—an' that ye ken's no to be fand at every dyke-side."

"A bargain be't," said the stranger, "an' much obliged to you, frien. I maun just tak pat-luck and be thankfu. But isna your waddin folks lang o' comin?" he added.

"They'll be here belyve," replied Willie, and added, "Ye'll no be blin, frien?"

"Ou, no," said the stranger; "thank goodness I hae my sight; but I am otherwise in such a bad state o' health, that I canna work, and am obliged to tak the fiddle for a subsistence."

While this conversation was going on, the wedding folks were seen dropping out of the manse in twos and threes, and making straight for the scene of the evening's festivities, where they all very soon after assembled. Ample justice having been done to all the good things that were now set before the merry party, and Willie and his colleague having had their share, and being thus put in excellent trim for entering on their labours, the place was cleared of all encumbrances, and a fair and open field left for the dancers. At this stage of the proceedings, Willie was led by his colleague to his station, and helped up to the elevated chair which had been provided for him, when the latter handed him his instrument, while he himself took up his position, fiddle in hand, on his principal's left, but standing on the ground, as there was no room for him on the platform.

Everything being now ready, and the expectant couples ranged in their respective places on the floor, Willie was called upon to begin, an order which he instantly obeyed by opening in great style.

On the conclusion of the first reel, in the musical department of which the strange fiddler had not interfered, the latter whispered to his coadjutor, that if he liked he would relieve him for the next.

"Weel," replied the latter, "if ye think ye can gae through wi't onything decently, ye may try your hand."

"I'll no promise much," said the stranger, now for the first time drawing his fiddle out of its bag; "but, for the credit o' the craft, I'll do the best I can."

Having said this, Willie's colleague drew his bow across the strings of his fiddle, with a preparatory flourish, when instantly every face in the apartment was turned towards him with an expression of delight and surprise. The tones of the fiddle were so immeasurably superior to those of poor Willie's salt-box, that the dullest and most indiscriminating ear amongst the revellers readily distinguished the amazing difference. But infinitely greater still was their surprise and delight when the stranger began to play. Nothing could exceed the energy, accuracy, and beauty of his performances. He was, in short, evidently a perfect master of the instrument, and this was instantly perceived and acknowledged by all, including Willie himself, who declared, with great candour and goodwill, that he had never heard a better fiddler in his life.

The result of this discovery was, that the former was not allowed to lift a bow during the remainder of the night, the whole burden of its labours being deposited on the shoulders, or perhaps we should rather say the finger-ends, of the stranger, who fiddled away with an apparently invincible elbow.

For several hours the dance went on without interruption, and without any apparent abatement whatever of vigour on the part of the performers; but, at the end of this period, some symptoms of exhaustion began to manifest themselves, which were at length fully declared by a temporary cessation of both the mirth and music.

It was at this interval in the revelries that the unknown fiddler, who had

been, by the unanimous voice of the party, installed in Willie's elevated chair, while the latter was reduced to his place on the floor, stretching himself over the platform, and tapping Willie on the hat with his bow, to draw his attention, inquired of him, in a whisper, if he knew who the lively little girl was that had been one of the partners in the last reel that had been danced.

"Is she a bit red-cheeked, dark-ee'd, and dark-haired lassie, about nineteen or twenty?" inquired Willie, in his turn.

"The same," replied the fiddler.

"Ou, that's Jeanie Harrison," said Willie, "a kind-hearted, nice bit lassie. No a better nor a bonnier in a' the parish. She's a dochter o' Mr Harrison o' Todshaws, the young couple's maister, an' a very respectable man. He's here himsel, too, amang the lave."

"Just so," replied his colleague. And he began to rosin his bow, and to screw his pegs anew, to prepare for the second storm of merriment, which he saw gathering, and threatening to burst upon him with increased fury. Amongst the first on the floor was Jeanie Harrison.

"Is there naebody'll tak me out for a reel?" exclaimed the lively girl; and without waiting for an answer, "Weel, then, I'll hae the fiddler." And she ran towards the platform on which the unknown performer was seated. But he did not wait her coming. He had heard her name her choice, laid down his fiddle, and sprang to the floor with the agility of a harlequin, exclaiming, "Thank ye, my bonny lassie, thank ye for the honour. I'm your man at a moment's notice, either for feet or fiddle."

It is not quite certain that Jeanie was in perfect earnest when she made choice of the musician for a partner, but it was now too late to retract, for the joke had taken with the company, and, with one

voice, or rather shout, they insisted on her keeping faithful to her engagement, and dancing a reel with the fiddler; and on this no one insisted more stoutly than the fiddler himself. Finding that she could do no better, the good-natured girl put the best face on the frolic she could, and prepared to do her partner every justice in the dance. Willie having now taken bow in hand, his colleague gave him the word of command, and away the dancers went like meteors; and here again the surprise of the party was greatly excited by the performances of our friend the fiddler, who danced as well as he played. To say merely that he far surpassed all in the room would not, perhaps, be saying much; for there were none of them very great adepts in the art. But, in truth, he danced with singular grace and lightness, and much did those who witnessed it marvel at the display. Neither was his bow to his partner, nor his manner of conducting her to her seat on the conclusion of the reel, less remarkable. It was distinguished by an air of refined gallantry certainly not often to be met with in those in his humble station in life. He might have been a master of ceremonies; and where the beggarly-looking fiddler had picked up these accomplishments every one found it difficult to conjecture.

On the termination of the dance, the fiddler—as we shall call him, *par excellence*, and to distinguish him from Willie—resumed his seat and his fiddle, and began to drive away with even more than his former spirit; but it was observed by more than one that his eye was now almost constantly fixed, for the remainder of the evening, as, indeed, it had been very frequently before, on his late partner, Jeanie Harrison. This circumstance, however, did not prevent him giving every satisfaction to those who danced to his music, nor did it in the least impair the spirit of his performances; for he was evidently too much practised in the use of the instrument,

which he managed with such consummate skill, to be put out, either by the contemplation of any chance object which might present itself, or by the vagaries of his imagination.

Leaving our musician in the discharge of his duty, we shall step over to where Jeanie Harrison is seated, to learn what she thinks of her partner, and what the Misses Murray, the daughters of a neighbouring farmer, between whom she sat, think of him, and of Jeanie having danced with a fiddler.

Premising that the Misses Murray, not being by any means beauties themselves, entertained a very reasonable and justifiable dislike and jealousy of all their own sex to whom nature had been more bountiful in this particular; and finding, moreover, that, from their excessively bad tempers (this, however, of course, not admitted by the ladies themselves), they could neither practise nor share in the amenities which usually mark the intercourse of the sexes, they had set up for connoisseurs in the articles of propriety and decorum, of which they professed to be profound judges—premising this, then, we proceed to quote the conversation that passed between the three ladies—that is, the Misses Murray and Miss Harrison; the latter taking her seat between them after dancing with the fiddler.

“My certy!” exclaimed the elder, with a very dignified toss of the head, “ye warna nice, Jeanie, to dance wi’ a fiddler. I wad hae been very ill aff, indeed, for a partner before I wad hae taen up wi’ such a ragamuffin.”

“An’ to go an’ ask him too!” said the younger, with an imitative toss. “I wadna ask the best man in the land to dance wi’ me, let alone a fiddler! If they dinna choose to come o’ their ain accord, they may stay.”

“Tuts, lassies, it was a’ a piece o’ fun,” said the good-humoured girl. “I’m sure everybody saw that but yersels. Besides, the man’s well aneugh—na,

a gude deal mair than that, if he was only a wee better clad. There’s no a better-lookin man in the room; and I wish, lassies,” she added, “ye may get as guid dancers in your partners—that’s a.”

“Umph! a bonny like taste ye hae, Jeanie, an’ a very strange notion o’ propriety!” exclaimed the elder, with another toss of the head.

“To dance wi’ a fiddler!” simpered out the younger—who, by the way, was no chicken either, being but a trifle on the right side of thirty.

“Ay, to be sure, dance wi’ a fiddler or a piper either. I’ll dance wi’ baith o’ them—an’ what for no?” replied Jeanie. “There’s neither sin nor shame in’t; and I’ll dance wi’ him again, if he’ll only but ask me.”

“An’ faith he’ll do that wi’ a’ the pleasure in the warld, my bonny lassie,” quoth the intrepid fiddler, leaping down once more from his high place; for, there having been a cessation of both music and dancing while the conversation above recorded was going on, he had heard everyword of it. “Wi’ a’ the pleasure in the warld,” he said, advancing towards Jeanie Harrison, and making one of his best bows of invitation; and again a shout of approbation from the company urged Jeanie to accept it, which she readily did, at once to gratify her friends and to provoke the Misses Murray.

Having accordingly taken her place on the floor, and other couples having been mustered for the set, Jeanie’s partner again called on Willie to strike up; again the dancers started, and again the fiddler astonished and delighted the company with the grace and elegance of his performances. On this occasion, however, the unknown musician’s predilection for his fair partner exhibited a more unequivocal character; and he even ventured to inquire if he might call at her father’s, to amuse the family for an hour or so with his fiddle.

"Nae objection in the wairld," replied Jeanie. "Come as often as ye like; and the aftener the better, if ye only bring yer fiddle wi' ye, for we're a' fond o' music."

"A bargain be't," said the gallant fiddler; and, at the conclusion of the reel, he again resumed his place on the platform and his fiddle.

"Time and the hour," says Shakespeare, "will wear through the roughest day;" and so they will, also, through the merriest night, as the joyous party of whom we are speaking now soon found.

Exhaustion and lassitude, though long defied, finally triumphed; and even the very candles seemed wearied of giving light; and, under the influence of these mirth-destroying feelings, the party at length broke up, and all departed, excepting the two fiddlers.

These worthies now adjourned to a public-house, which was close by, and set very gravely about settling what was to them the serious business of the evening. Willie had received thirty-one shillings as payment in full for their united labours; and, in consideration of the large and unexpected portion of them which had fallen to the stranger's share, he generously determined, notwithstanding that he was the principal party, as having been the first engaged, to give him precisely the one-half of the money, or fifteen shillings and sixpence.

"Very fair," said the stranger, on this being announced to him by his brother in trade—very fair; but what would ye think of our drinking the odd sixpences?"

"Wi' a' my heart," replied Willie, "wi' a' my heart. A very guid notion."

And a jug of toddy, to the value of one shilling, was accordingly ordered and produced, over which the two got as thick as ben-leather.

"Ye're a guid fiddler—I'll say that o' ye," quoth Willie, after tossing down the first glass of the warm, exhilarating

beverage. "I would never wish to hear a better."

"I have had some practice," said the other modestly, and at the same time following his companion's example with his glass.

"Nae doot, nae doot, sae's seen on your playin'," replied the latter. "How do you fend wi' yer fiddle? Do ye mak onything o' a guid leevin o't?"

"No that ill ava," said the stranger. "I play for the auld leddy at the castle—Castle Gowan, ye ken; indeed, I'm sometimes ca'd the leddy's fiddler, and she's uncommon guid to me. I neither want bite nor sowp when I gang there."

"That's sae far weel," replied Willie. "She's a guid judge o' music that Leddy Gowan, as I hear them say; and I'm tauld her son, Sir John, plays a capital bow."

"No amiss, I believe," said the stranger; "but the leddy, as ye say, is an excellent judge o' music, although whiles, I think, rather ower fond o't, for she maks me play for hours thegither, when I wad far rather be wi' Tam Yule, her butler, a sonsy, guid-natured chiel, that's no sweer o' the cap. But, speaking o' that, I'll tell ye what, frien," he continued, "if ye'll come up to Castle Gowan ony day, I'll be blithe to see you, for I'm there at least ance every day, and I'll warrant ye—for ye see I can use every liberty there—in a guid het dinner, an' a jug o' hetter toddy to wash it ower wi'."

"A bargain be't," quoth Willie; "will the morn do?"

"Perfectly," said the stranger; "the sooner the better."

This settled, Willie proceeded to a subject which had been for some time near his heart, but which he felt some delicacy in broaching. This feeling, however, having gradually given way before the influence of the toddy, and of his friend's frank and jovial manner, he at length ventured, though cautiously, to step on the ice.

"That's an uncommon guid instrument o' yours, frien," he said.

"Very good," replied his companion, briefly.

"But ye'll hae mair than that ane, nae doot?" rejoined the other.

"I hae ither twa."

"In that case," said Willie, "maybe ye wad hae nae objection to pairt wi' that ane, an' the price offered ye wur a' the mair temptin. I'll gie ye the fifteen shillins I hae won the nicht, an' my fiddle, for't."

"Thank ye, frien, thank ye for your offer," replied the stranger; "but I daurna accept o't, though I war willin. The fiddle was gien to me by Leddy Gowan, and I daurna pairt wi't. She wad miss't, and then there would be the deevil to pay."

"Oh, an' that's the case," said Willie, "I'll sae nae mair aboot it; but it's a first-rate fiddle—sae guid a ane, that it nicht amaint play the lane o't."

It being now very late, or rather early, and the toddy jug emptied, the blind fiddler and his friend parted, on the understanding, however, that the former would visit the latter at the castle (whither he was now going, he said, to seek a night's quarters) on the following day.

True to his appointment, Willie appeared next day at Gowan House, or Castle Gowan, as it was more generally called, and inquired for "the fiddler." His inquiry was met with great civility and politeness by the footman who opened the door. He was told "the fiddler" was there, and desired to walk in. Obeying the invitation, Willie, conducted by the footman, entered a spacious apartment, where he was soon afterwards entertained with a sumptuous dinner, in which his friend the fiddler joined him.

"My word, neighbour," said Willie, after having made a hearty meal of the good things that were set before him, and having drank in proportion, "but

ye're in noble quarters here. This is truly fiddlin to some purpose, an' treatin the art as it ought to be treated in the persons o' its professors. But what," he added, "if Sir John should come in upon us? He wadna like maybe a' thegither to see a stranger wi' ye?"

"Deil a bodle I care for Sir John, Willie! He's but a wild harum-scarum throughhither chap at the best, an' no muckle to be heeded."

"Ay, he's fond o' a frolic, they tell me," quoth Willie; "an' there's a heap o' gie queer anes laid to his charge, whether they be true or no; but his heart's in the richt place, I'm thinkin, for a' that. I've heard o' mony guid turns he has done."

"Ou, he's no a bad chiel, on the whole, I daresay," replied Willie's companion. "His bark's waur than his bite—an' that's mair than can be said o' a rat-trap, at ony rate."

It was about this period, and then for the first time, that certain strange and vague suspicions suddenly entered Willie's mind regarding his entertainer. He had remarked that the latter gave his orders with an air of authority which he thought scarcely becoming in one who occupied the humble situation of "the lady's fiddler;" but, singular as this appeared to him, the alacrity and silence with which these orders were obeyed, was to poor Willie still more unaccountable. He said nothing, however; but much did he marvel at the singular good fortune of his brother-in-trade. He had never known a fiddler so quartered before; and, lost in admiration of his friend's felicity, he was about again to express his ideas on the subject, when a servant in splendid livery entered the room, and bowing respectfully, said, "The carriage waits you, Sir John."

"I will be with you presently, Thomas," replied who? inquires the reader.

Why, Willie's companion!

What! is he then Sir John Gowan—he, the fiddler at the penny-wedding,

Sir John Gowan of Castle Gowan, the most extensive proprietor and the wealthiest man in the county?

The same and no other, good reader, we assure thee.

A great lover of frolic, as he himself said, was Sir John ; and this was one of the pranks in which he delighted. He was an enthusiastic fiddler ; and, as has been already shown, performed with singular skill on that most difficult, but most delightful, of all musical instruments.

We will not attempt to describe poor Willie's amazement and confusion when this singular fact became known to him ; for they are indescribable, and therefore better left to the reader's imagination. On recovering a little from his surprise, however, he endeavoured to express his astonishment in such broken sentences as these—" Wha in earth wad hae ever dreamed o't ? Rosit an' fiddle-strings ! —this beats a'. Faith, a'n I've been fairly taen in—clean dune for. A knight o' the shire to play at a penny-waddin wi' blin Willie Hodge the fiddler ! The like was ne'er heard tell o'."

As it is unnecessary, and would certainly be tedious, to protract the scene at this particular point in our story, we cut it short by saying, that Sir John presented Willie with the fiddle he had so much coveted, and which he had vainly endeavoured to purchase ; that he then told down to him the half of the proceeds of the previous night's labours which he had pocketed, added a handsome *douceur* from his own purse, and finally dismissed him with a pressing and cordial invitation to visit the castle as often as it suited his inclination and convenience.

Having arrived at this landing-place in our tale, we pause to explain one or two things, which is necessary for the full elucidation of the sequel. With regard to Sir John Gowan himself, there is little to add to what has been already said of him ; for, brief though these

notices of him are, they contain nearly all that the reader need care to know about him. He was addicted to such pranks as that just recorded ; but this, if it was a defect in his character, was the only one. For the rest, he was an excellent young man—kind, generous, and affable ; of the strictest honour, and the most upright principles. He was, moreover, an exceedingly handsome man, and highly accomplished. At this period, he was unmarried, and lived with his mother, Lady Gowan, to whom he was most affectionately attached. Sir John had, at one time, mingled a good deal with the fashionable society of the metropolis ; but soon became disgusted with the heartlessness of those who composed it, and with the frivolity of their pursuits ; and in this frame of mind he came to the resolution of retiring to his estate, and of giving himself up entirely to the quiet enjoyments of a country life, and the pleasing duties which his position as a large landed proprietor entailed upon him.

Simple in all his tastes and habits, Sir John had been unable to discover, in any of the manufactured beauties to whom he had been, from time to time, introduced while he resided in London, one to whom he could think of intrusting his happiness. The wife he desired was one fresh from the hand of nature, not one remodelled by the square and rule of art ; and such a one he thought he had found during his adventure of the previous night.

Bringing this digression, which we may liken to an interlude, to a close, we again draw up the curtain, and open the second act of our little drama with an exhibition of the residence of Mr Harrison at Todshaws.

The house or farm-steading of this worthy person was of the very best description of such establishments. The building itself was substantial, nay, even handsome, while the excellent garden which was attached to it, and all the

other accessories and appurtenances with which it was surrounded, indicated wealth and comfort. Its situation was on the summit of a gentle eminence that sloped down in front to a noisy little rivulet, that careered along through a narrow rugged glen overhanging with hazel, till it came nearly opposite the house, where it wound through an open plat of green sward, and shortly after again plunged into another little romantic ravine similar to the one it had left.

The approach to Mr Harrison's house lay along this little rivulet, and was commanded, for a considerable distance, by the view from the former—a circumstance which enabled Jeanie Harrison to descry, one fine summer afternoon, two or three days after the occurrence of the events just related, the approach of the fiddler with whom she had danced at the wedding. On making this discovery, Jeanie ran to announce the joyful intelligence to all the other members of the family, and the prospect of a merry dancing afternoon opened on the delighted eyes of its younger branches.

When the fiddler—with whose identity the reader is now as well acquainted as we are—had reached the bottom of the ascent that led to the house, Jeanie, with excessive joy beaming in her bright and expressive eye, and her cheek glowing with the roseate hues of health, rushed down to meet him, and to welcome him to Todshaws.

"Thank ye, my bonny lassie—thank ye," replied the disguised baronet, expressing himself in character, and speaking the language of his assumed station.

"Are ye ready for anither dance?"

"Oh, a score o' them—a thousand o' them," said the lively girl.

"But will your faither, think ye, hae nae objections to my comin?" inquired the fiddler.

"Nane in the wairld. My faither is nane o' your sour carles that wad deny

ither folk the pleasures they canna enjoy themsel's. He likes to see a'body happy around him—every ane his ain way."

"An' your mother?"

"Jist the same. Ye'll find her waur to fiddle doun than ony o' us. She'll dance as lang's a string hauds o't."

"Then, I may be quite at my ease," rejoined Sir John.

"Quite so," replied Jeanie—and she slipped half-a-crown into his hand—"and there's your arles; but ye'll be minded better ere ye leave us."

"My word, no an ill beginnin," quoth the musician, looking with well-affected delight at the coin, and afterwards putting it carefully into his pocket. "But ye could hae gien me a far mair acceptable arles than half-a-crown," he added, "and no been a penny the poorer either."

"What's that?" said Jeanie, laughing and blushing at the same time, and more than half guessing, from the looks of the *pawky* fiddler, what was meant.

"Why, my bonny leddie," he replied, "jist a kiss o' that pretty little mou o' yours."

"Oh, ye gowk!" exclaimed Jeanie, with a roguish glance at her humble gallant; for, disguised as he was, he was not able to conceal a very handsome person, nor the very agreeable expression of a set of remarkably fine features—qualities which did not escape the vigilance of the female eye that was now scanning their possessor. Nor would we say that these qualities were viewed with total indifference, or without producing their effect, even although they did belong to a fiddler.

"Oh, ye gowk!" said Jeanie; "wha ever heard o' a fiddler preferring a kiss to half-a-crown?"

"But I do, though," replied the disguised knight; "and I'll gie ye yours back again for't."

"The mair fule you," exclaimed Jeanie, rushing away towards the house, and leaving the fiddler to make

out the remainder of the way by himself.

On reaching the house, the musician was ushered into the kitchen, where a plentiful repast was instantly set before him, by the kind and considerate hospitality of Jeanie, who, not contented with her guest's making a hearty meal at table, insisted on his pocketing certain pieces of cheese, cold meat, &c., which were left. These the fiddler steadily refused ; but Jeanie would take no denial, and with her own hands crammed them into his capacious pockets, which, after the operation, stuck out like a well-filled pair of saddle-bags. But there was no need for any one who might be curious to know what they contained, to look into them for that purpose. Certain projecting bones of mutton and beef, which it was found impossible to get altogether out of sight, sufficiently indicated their contents. Of this particular circumstance, however—we mean the projection of the bones from the pockets—we must observe, the owner of the said pockets was not aware, otherwise, we daresay, he would have been a little more positive in rejecting the provender which Jeanie's warmheartedness and benevolence had forced upon him.

Be this as it may, however, so soon as the musician had finished his repast, he took fiddle in hand, and opened the evening with a slow pathetic Scottish air, which he played so exquisitely that Jeanie's eye filled with a tear, as she listened in raptures to the sweet but melancholy turns of the affecting tune.

Twice the musician played over the touching strain, delighted to perceive the effects of the music on the lovely girl who stood before him, and rightly conceiving it to be an unequivocal proof of a susceptible heart and of a generous nature.

A third time he began the beautiful air ; but he now accompanied it with a song, and in this accomplishment he was

no less perfect than in the others which have been already attributed to him. His voice was at once manly and melodious, and he conducted it with a skill that did it every justice. Having played two or three bars of the tune, his rich and well-regulated voice chimed in with the following words :—

Oh, I hae lived wi' high-bred dames,
Each state of life to prove,
But never till this hour hae met
The girl that I could love.

It's no in fashion's gilded ha's
That she is to be seen ;
Beneath her father's humble roof
Abides my bonny Jean.

Oh, wad she deign ae thought to wair,
Ae kindly thought on me,
Wi' pearls I wad deck her hair,
Though low be my degree.

Wi' pearls I wad deck her hair,
Wi' gowd her wrists sae sma' ;
An' had I lands and houses, she'd
Be leddy ower them a'.

The sun abune's no what he seems,
Nor is the night's fair queen ;
Then wha kens wha the minstrel is
That's wooin bonny Jean ?

Jeanie could not help feeling a little strange as the minstrel proceeded with a song which seemed to have so close a reference to herself.

She, of course, did not consider this circumstance otherwise than as merely accidental ; but she could not help, nevertheless, being somewhat embarrassed by it ; and this was made sufficiently evident by the blush that mantled on her cheek, and by the confusion of her manner under the fixed gaze of the singer, while repeating the verses just quoted.

When he had concluded, "Well, good folks all," he said, "what think ye of my song?" And without waiting for an answer, about which he seemed very indifferent, he added, "and how do you like it, Jeanie?" directing the question exclusively to the party he named.

"Very weel," replied Jeanie, again blushing, but still more deeply than

before ; "the song is pretty, an' the air delightfu' ; but some o' the verses are riddles to me. I dinna thoroughly understand them."

"Don't you ?" replied Sir John, laughing ; "then I'll explain them to you by-and-by ; but, in the meantime, I must screw my pegs anew, and work for my dinner, for I see the good folk about me here are all impatience to begin." A fact this which was instantly acknowledged by a dozen voices ; and straightway the whole party proceeded, in compliance with a suggestion of Mr Harrison, to the green in front of the house, where Sir John took up his position on the top of an inverted wheelbarrow, and immediately commenced his labours.

For several hours the dance went on with uninterrupted glee, old Mr Harrison and his wife appearing to enjoy the sport as much as the youngest of the party, and both being delighted with the masterly playing of the musician. But although, as on a former occasion, Sir John did not suffer anything to interfere with, or interrupt the charge of the duties expected of him, there was but a very small portion of his mind or thoughts engrossed by the employment in which he was engaged. All, or nearly all, were directed to the contemplation of the object on which his affections had now become irrevocably fixed.

Neither was his visit to Todshaws, on this occasion, by any means dictated solely by the frivolous object of affording its inmates entertainment by his musical talents. His purpose was a much more serious one. It was to ascertain, as far as such an opportunity would afford him the means, the dispositions and temper of his fair enslaver. Of these, his natural shrewdness had enabled him to make a pretty correct estimate on the night of the wedding ; but he was desirous of seeing her in other circumstances, and he thought

none more suitable for his purpose than those of a domestic nature.

It was, then, to see her in this position that he had now come ; and the result of his observations was highly gratifying to him.

He found in Miss Harrison all that he, at any rate, desired in woman. He found her guileless, cheerful, gentle, kind-hearted, and good-tempered, beloved by all around her, and returning the affection bestowed on her with a sincere and ardent love.

Such were the discoveries which the disguised baronet made on this occasion ; and never did hidden treasure half so much gladden the heart of the fortunate finder, as these did that of him who made them. It is true that Sir John could not be sure, nor was he, that his addresses would be received by Miss Harrison, even after he should have made himself known ; but he could not help entertaining a pretty strong confidence in his own powers of persuasion, nor being, consequently, tolerably sanguine of success. All this, however, was to be the work of another day. In the meantime, the dancers having had their hearts' content of capering on the green sward, the fiddle was put up, and the fiddler once more invited into the house, where he was entertained with the same hospitality as before, and another half-crown slipped into his hand. This he also put carefully into his pocket ; and having partaken lightly of what was set before him, rose up to depart, alleging that he had a good way to go, and was desirous of availing himself of the little daylight that still remained. He was pressed to remain all night, but this he declined ; promising, however, in reply to the urgent entreaties with which he was assailed on all sides to stay, that he would very soon repeat his visit. Miss Harrison he took by the hand, and said, "I promised to explain to you the poetical riddle which I read, or rather attempted

to sing, this evening. It is now too late to do this, for the explanation is a long one; but I will be here again, without fail, in a day or two, when I shall solve all, and, I trust, to your satisfaction. Till then, do not forget your poor fiddler."

"No, I winna forget ye," said Jeanie. "It wadna be easy to forget aye that has contributed so much to our happiness. Neither would it be more than gratefu' to do so, I think."

"And you are too kind a creature to be ungrateful to any one, however humble may be their attempts to win your favour; of that I feel assured." Having said this, and perceiving that he was unobserved, he quickly raised the fair hand he held to his lips, kissed it, and hurried out of the door.

What Jane Harrison thought of this piece of gallantry from a fiddler, we really do not know, and therefore will say nothing about it. Whatever her thoughts were, she kept them to herself. Neither did she mention to any one the circumstance which gave rise to them. Nor did she say, but for what reason we are ignorant, how much she had been pleased with the general manners of the humble musician, with the melodious tones of his voice, and the fine expression of his dark hazel eye. Oh, love, love! thou art a leveller, indeed, else how should it happen that the pretty daughter of a wealthy and respectable yeoman should think for a moment, with certain indescribable feelings, of a poor itinerant fiddler? Mark, good reader, however, we do not say that Miss Harrison was absolutely in love with the musician. By no means. That would certainly be saying too much. But it is as certainly true, that she had perceived something about him that left no disagreeable impression—nay, something which she wished she might meet with in her future husband, whoever he might be.

Leaving Jeanie Harrison to such

reflections as these, we will follow the footsteps of the disguised baronet. On leaving the house, he walked at a rapid pace for an hour or so, till he came to a turn in the road, at the distance of about four miles from Todshaws, where his gig and man-servant, with a change of clothes, were waiting him by appointment. Having hastily divested himself of his disguise, and resumed his own dress, he stepped into the vehicle, and about midnight arrived at Castle Gowan.

In this romantic attachment of Sir John Gowan's, or rather in the romantic project which it suggested to him of offering his heart and hand to the daughter of a humble farmer, there was but one doubtful point on his side of the question, at any rate. This was, whether he could obtain the consent of his mother to such a proceeding. She loved him with the utmost tenderness; and, naturally of a mild, gentle, and affectionate disposition, her sole delight lay in promoting the happiness of her beloved son. To secure this great object of her life, there was scarcely any sacrifice which she would not make, nor any proposal with which she would not willingly comply. This Sir John well knew, and fully appreciated; but he felt that the call which he was now about to make on her maternal love was more than he ought to expect she would answer. He, in short, felt that she might, with good reason, and without the slightest infringement of her regard for him, object to his marrying so far beneath his station. It was not, therefore, without some misgivings that he entered his mother's private apartment on the day following his adventure at Todshaws, for the purpose of divulging the secret of his attachment, and hinting at the resolution he had formed regarding it.

"Mother," he said, after a pause which had been preceded by the usual affectionate inquiries of the morning,

"you have often expressed a wish that I would marry."

"I have, John," replied the good old lady. "Nothing in this world would afford me greater gratification than to see you united to a woman who should be every way deserving of you—one with whom you could live happily."

"Ay, that last is the great, the important consideration, at least with me. But where, mother, am I to find that woman? I have mingled a good deal with the higher ranks of society, and there, certainly, I have not been able to find her. I am not so uncharitable as to say—nay, God forbid I should—that there are not as good, as virtuous, as amiable women, in the upper classes of society as in the lower. I have no doubt there are. All that I mean to say is, that I have not been fortunate enough to find one in that sphere to suit my fancy, and have no hopes of ever doing so. Besides, the feelings, sentiments, and dispositions of these persons, both male and female, are so completely disguised by a factitious manner, and by conventional rules, that you never can discover what is their real nature and character. They are still strangers to you, however long you may be acquainted with them. You cannot tell who or what they are. The roller of fashion reduces them all to one level; and, being all clapped into the same mould, they become mere repetitions of each other, as like as peas, without exhibiting the slightest point of variety. Now, mother," continued Sir John, "the wife I should like is one whose heart, whose inmost nature, should be at once open to my view, unwarped and undisguised by the customs and fashions of the world."

"Upon my word, John, you are more than usually eloquent this morning," said Lady Gowan, laughing. "But pray now, do tell me, John, shortly and unequivocally, what is the drift of this long, flowery, and very sensible speech

of yours? for that there is a drift in it I can clearly perceive. You are aiming at something which you do not like to plump upon me at once."

Sir John looked a good deal confused on finding that his mother's shrewdness had detected a latent purpose in his remarks, and endeavoured to evade the acknowledgment of that purpose, until he should have her opinion of the observations he had made; and in this he succeeded. Having pressed her on this point—

"Well, my son," replied Lady Gowan, "if you think that you cannot find a woman in a station of life corresponding to your own that will suit your taste, look for her in any other you please; and, when found, take her. Consult your own happiness, John, and in doing so you will consult mine. I will not object to your marrying whomsoever you please. All that I bargain for is, that she be a perfectly virtuous woman, and of irreproachable character; and I don't think this is being unreasonable. But do now, John, tell me at once," she added, in a graver tone, and taking her son solemnly by the hand, "have you fixed your affections on a woman of humble birth and station? I rather suspect this is the case."

"I have then, mother," replied Sir John, returning his mother's expressive and affectionate pressure of the hand; "the daughter of a humble yeoman, a woman who—" But we will spare the reader the infliction of the high-flown encomiums of all sorts which Sir John lavished on the object of his affections. Suffice it to say, that they included every quality of both mind and person which go to the adornment of the female sex.

When he had concluded, Lady Gowan, who made the necessary abatements from the panegyric her son had passed on the lady of his choice, said that, with regard to his attachment, she could indeed have wished it had fallen on one some-

what nearer his own station in life, but that, nevertheless, she had no objection whatever to accept of Miss Harrison as a daughter-in-law, since she was his choice. "Nay," she added, smiling, "if she only possesses one-tenth—ay, one-tenth, John—of the good qualities with which you have endowed her, I must say you are a singularly fortunate man to have fallen in with such a treasure. But, John, allow me to say that, old woman as I am, I think that I could very easily show you that your prejudices, vulgar prejudices I must call them, against the higher classes of society, are unreasonable, unjust, and, I would add, illiberal, and therefore wholly unworthy of you. Does the elegance, the refinement, the accomplishments, the propriety of manner and delicacy of sentiment, to be met with in these circles, go for nothing with you? Does——"

"My dear mother," here burst in Sir John, "if you please, we will not argue the point; for, in truth, I do not feel disposed just now to argue about anything. I presume I am to understand, my ever kind and indulgent parent, that I have your full consent to marry Miss Harrison—that is, of course, if Miss Harrison will marry me?"

"Fully and freely, my child," said the old lady, now flinging her arms around her son's neck, while a tear glistened in her eye; "and may God bless your union, and make it happy!"

Sir John with no less emotion returned the embrace of his affectionate parent, and, in the most grateful language he could command, thanked her for her ready compliance with his wishes.

On the day following that on which the preceding conversation between Sir John Gowan and his mother took place, the inmates of Todshaws were surprised at the appearance of a splendid equipage driving up towards the house.

"Wha in a' the world's this?" said Jeanie to her father, as they both stood

at the door, looking at the glittering vehicle, as it flashed in the sun and rolled on towards them. "Some travellers that hae mistaen their road."

"Very likely," replied her father; "yet I canna understand what kind o' a mistake it could be that should bring them to such an out-o'-the-way place as this. It's no a regular carriage road—that they might hae seen; an' if they hae gane wrang, they'll find some difficulty in getting richt again. But here they are, sae we'll sune ken a' about it."

As Mr Harrison said this, the carriage, now at the distance of only some twenty or thirty yards from the house, stopped; a gentleman stepped out, and advanced smiling towards Mr Harrison and his daughter. They looked surprised, nay confounded; for they could not at all comprehend who their visitor was.

"How do you do, Mr Harrison?" exclaimed the latter, stretching out his hand to the person he addressed; "and how do you do, Miss Harrison?" he said, taking Jeanie next by the hand.

In the stranger's tones and manner the acute perceptions of Miss Harrison recognised something she had heard and seen before, and the recognition greatly perplexed her; nor was this perplexity lessened by the discovery which she also made, that the countenance of the stranger recalled one which she had seen on some former occasion. In short, the person now before her she thought presented a most extraordinary likeness to the fiddler—only that he had no fiddle, that he was infinitely better dressed, and that his pockets were not sticking out with lumps of cheese and cold beef. That they were the same person, however, she never dreamed for a moment.

In his daughter's perplexity on account of the resemblances alluded to, Mr Harrison did not participate, as, having paid little or no attention to the personal appearance of the fiddler, he

detected none of them ; and it was thus that he replied to the stranger's courtesies with a gravity and coolness which contrasted strangely with the evident embarrassment and confusion of his daughter, although she herself did not well know how this accidental resemblance, as she deemed it, should have had such an effect upon her.

Immediately after the interchange of the commonplace civilities above mentioned had passed between the stranger and Mr Harrison and his daughter—

"Mr Harrison," he said, "may I have a private word with you?"

"Certainly, sir," replied the former. And he led the way into a little back parlour.

"Excuse us for a few minutes, Miss Harrison," said the stranger, with a smile, ere he followed, and bowing gallantly to her as he spoke.

On entering the parlour, Mr Harrison requested the stranger to take a seat, and placing himself in another, he awaited the communication of his visitor.

"Mr Harrison," now began the latter, "in the first place, it may be proper to inform you that I am Sir John Gowan of Castle Gowan."

"Oh!" said Mr Harrison, rising from his seat, approaching Sir John, and extending his hand towards him; "I am very happy indeed to see Sir John Gowan. I never had the pleasure of seeing you before, sir; but I have heard much of you, and not to your discredit, I assure you, Sir John."

"Well, that is some satisfaction, at any rate, Mr Harrison," replied the baronet, laughing. "I am glad that my character, since it happens to be a good one, has been before me. It may be of service to me. But to proceed to business. You will hardly recognise in me, my friend, I daresay," continued Sir John, "a certain fiddler who played to you at a certain wedding lately, and to whose music you and your family

danced on the green in front of your own house the other night."

Mr Harrison's first reply to this extraordinary observation was a broad stare of amazement and utter non-comprehension. But after a few minutes' pause thus employed, "No, certainly not, sir," he said, still greatly perplexed and amazed. "But I do not understand you. What is it you mean, Sir John?"

"Why," replied the latter, laughing, "I mean very distinctly that I was the musician on both of the occasions alluded to. The personification of such a character has been one of my favourite frolics; and however foolish it may be considered, I trust it will at least be allowed to have been a harmless one."

"Well, this is most extraordinary," replied Mr Harrison, in great astonishment. "Can it be possible? Is it really true, Sir John, or are ye jesting?"

"Not a bit of that, I assure you, sir. I am in sober earnest. But all this," continued Sir John, "is but a prelude to the business I came upon. To be short, then, Mr Harrison: I saw and particularly marked your daughter on the two occasions alluded to, and the result, in few words, is, that I have conceived a very strong attachment to her. Her beauty, her cheerfulness, her good temper, and simplicity, have won my heart, and I have now come to offer her my hand."

"Why, Sir John, this—this," stammered out the astonished farmer, "is more extraordinary still. You do my daughter and myself great honour, Sir John—great honour, indeed."

"Not a word of that," replied the knight, "not a word of that, Mr Harrison. My motives are selfish. I am studying my own happiness, and therefore am not entitled to any acknowledgments of that kind. You, I hope, sir, have no objection to accept of me as a son-in-law; and I trust your daughter

will have no very serious ones either. Her affections, I hope, are not pre-engaged?"

"Not that I know of, Sir John," replied Mr Harrison; "indeed, I may venture to say positively that they are not. The girl has never yet, that I am aware of, thought of a husband—at least, not more than young women usually do; and as to my having any objections, Sir John, so far from that, I feel, I assure you, extremely grateful for such a singular mark of your favour and condescension as that you have just mentioned."

"And you anticipate no very formidable ones on the part of your daughter?"

"Certainly not, Sir John; it is impossible there should."

"Will you, then, my dear sir," added Sir John, "be kind enough to go to Miss Harrison and break this matter to her, and I will wait your return?"

With this request the farmer instantly complied; and having found his daughter, opened to her at once the extraordinary commission with which he was charged. We would fain describe, but find ourselves wholly incompetent to the task, the effect which Mr Harrison's communication had upon his daughter, and on the other female members of the family, to all of whom it was also soon known. There was screaming, shouting, laughing, crying, fear, joy, terror, and amazement, all blended together in one tremendous medley, and so loud that it reached the ears of Sir John himself, who, guessing the cause of it, laughed very heartily at the strange uproar.

"But, oh! the cauld beef an' the cheese that I crammed into his pockets, father," exclaimed Jeanie, running about the room in great agitation. "He'll never forgie me that—never, never," she said, in great distress of mind. "To fill a knight's pockets wi' dauds o' beef and cheese! Oh! goodness, goodness! I canna marry him. I canna see him after that. It's im-

possible, father — impossible, impossible!"

"If that be a' your objections, Jeanie," replied her father, smiling, "we'll soon get the better o't. I'll undertake to procure ye Sir John's forgiveness for the cauld beef and cheese—that's if ye think it necessary to ask a man's pardon for filling his pockets wi' most unexceptionable provender. I wish every honest man's pouches war as weel lined, lassie, as Sir John's was that nicht." Saying this, Mr Harrison returned to Sir John, and informed him of the result of his mission, which was—but this he had rather made out than been told, for Jeanie could not be brought to give any rational answer at all—that his addresses would not, he believed, be disagreeable to his daughter, "which," he added, "is, I suppose, all that you desire in the meantime, Sir John."

"Nothing more, nothing more, Mr Harrison; she that's not worth wooing's not worth winning. I only desired your consent to my addresses, and a regular and honourable introduction to your daughter. The rest belongs to me. I will now fight my own battle, since you have cleared the way, and only desire that you may wish me success."

"That I do with all my heart," replied the farmer; "and, if I can lend you a hand, I will do it with right good will."

"Thank you, Mr Harrison, thank you," replied Sir John; "and now, my dear sir," he continued, "since you have so kindly assisted me thus far, will you be good enough to help me just one step farther? Will you now introduce me in my new character to your daughter? Hitherto she has known me only," he said, smiling as he spoke, "as an itinerant fiddler, and I long to meet her on a more serious footing—and on one," he added, again laughing, "I hope, a trifle more respectable."

"That I'll very willingly do, Sir John," replied Mr Harrison, smiling in his turn ; "but I must tell you plainly, that I have some doubts of being able to prevail on Jane to meet you at this particular moment. She has one most serious objection to seeing you."

"Indeed!" replied Sir John, with an earnestness that betokened some alarm. "Pray, what is that objection?"

"Why, sir," rejoined the latter, "allow me to reply to that question by asking you another. Have you any recollection of carrying away out of my house, on the last night you were here, a pocketful of cheese and cold beef?"

"Oh! perfectly, perfectly," said Sir John, laughing, yet somewhat perplexed. "Miss Harrison was kind enough to furnish me with the very liberal supply of the articles you allude to; cramming

them into my pocket with her own fair hands."

"Just so," replied Mr Harrison, now laughing in his turn. "Well, then, to tell you a truth, Sir John, Jane is so dreadfully ashamed of that circumstance, that she positively will not face you."

"Oh ho! is that the affair?" exclaimed the delighted baronet. "Why, then, if she won't come to us, we'll go to her; so lead the way, Mr Harrison, if you please." Mr Harrison did lead the way, and Jane was caught.

Beyond this point our story need not be prolonged, as here all its interest ceases. We have only now to add, then, that the winning manners, gentle dispositions, and very elegant person of Sir John Gowan, very soon completed the conquest he aimed at; and Jeanie Harrison, in due time, became LADY GOWAN.

PEAT-CASTING TIME.

BY THOMAS GILLESPIE.

IN the olden times, there were certain fixed occasions when labour and frolic went hand in hand—when professional duty and kindhearted glee mutually kissed each other. The "rockin'" mentioned by Burns—

On Fasten e'en we had a rockin'—

I still see in the dim and hazy distance of the past. It is only under the refractive medium of vigorous recollection that I can again bring up to view (as the Witch of Endor did Samuel) those images that have been reposing, "'midst the wreck of things that were," for more than fifty years. Yet my early boyhood was familiar with these social senile and juvenile festivities. There still sits Janet Smith, in her toy-mutch

and check-apron, projecting at intervals the well-filled spindle into the distance. Beside her is Isabel Kirk, elongating and twirling the yet unwound thread. Nanny Nivison occupies a *creepy* on the further side of the fire (making the third Fate!), with her shears. Around, and on bedsides, are seated Lizzy Gibson, with her favoured lad; Tam Kirkpatrick, with his jo Jean on his knee; Rob Paton the stirk-herd; and your humble servant. And "now the crack gaes round, and who so wilful as to put it by?" The story of past times; the report of recent love-matches and mis-carriages; the gleeful song, bursting unbid from the young heart, swelling forth in beauty and in brightness like the waters from the rock of Meribah;

the occasional female remonstrance against certain *welcome* impertinences, in shape of, "Come now, Tam—name o' yer nonsense." "Will ! I say, be peaceable, and behave yersel afore folk. 'Od, ye'll squeeze the very breath out o' a body."

Till, in a social glass o' strunt,
They parted off careering
On sic a night.

I've heard a lilting at our ewe-milking.

How few of the present generation have ever heard of this "lilting," except in song. It is the gayest and sunniest season of the year. The young lambs, in their sportive whiteness, are coursing it, and bleating it, responsive to their dams, on the hill above. The old ewes on the plain are marching—

The labour much of man and dog—

to the pen or fold. The response to the clear-toned bleat of their woolly progeny is given, anon and anon, in a short, broken, low bass. It is the raven conversing with the jackdaw ! All is bustle, excitement, and badinage.

"Weer up that ewe, Jenny, lass. Wha kens but her woo may yet be a blanket for you and ye ken wha to sleep in!"

"Haud yer tongue, Tammie, and gang hame to yer books and yer schoolin. Troth, it will be twa days ere the crows dirty your kirk riggin !"

Wouf, wouf, wouf!—hee, hee, hee!—hoch, hoch, hoch!—there *in* they go, and *in* they are, their horny heads wedged over each other, and a trio of stout, well-made damsels, with petticoats tied up "*à la breeches*," tugging away at their well-filled dugs.

"Troth, Jenny, that ewe will waur ye ; 'od, I think ye ha'e gotten haud o' the auld tup himsel. He's as powerfu, let me tell ye, as auld Francie, wham ye kissed sae snug last nicht ayont the peat-mou."

"Troth, at weel, Tam, ye're a fearfu

liar. They wad be fonder than I am o' cock birds wha wad gie tippence for the stite o' a howlet."

"Howlet here, howlet there, Jenny, ye ken weel his auld brass will buy you a new pan."

At this crisis the crack becomes general and inaudible from its universality, mixed as it is with the bleating of ewes, the barking of dogs, together with the singing of herd-laddies and of your humble servant.

Harvest is a blithe time ! May all the charms of "Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on him" who shall first invent a reaping-machine ! The best of all reaping-machines is "the human arm divine," whether brawny or muscular, or soft and rounded. The old woman of sixty sits all year long at her domestic occupations—you would deem her incapable of any out-door exertions; but, at the sound of the harvest-horn, she renews her youth, and sallies forth into the harvest-field, with hook over shoulder, and a heart buoyant with the spirit of the season, to take her place and drive her rig with the youngest there. The half-grown boy and girl of fourteen are mingled up in duty and in frolic, in jest and jibe, and jeer and laugh, with the stoutest and the most matured. Mothers and daughters, husbands and wives, and, above and beyond all, "lads and lasses, lovers gay !" mix and mingle in one united band, for honest labour and exquisite enjoyment; and when at last the joyous kirn is won—when the maiden of straw is borne aloft and in triumph, to adorn for twelve months the wall of the farmer's ben—when the rich and cooling curds-and-cream have been ramhorn-spooned into as many mouths as there are persons in the "toun"—then comes the mighty and long-anticipated festival, the roasted ox, the stewed sheep, the big pot enriched with the cheering and elevating draught, the punch dealt about in ladles and in jugs, the inspiring

fiddle, the maddening reel, and the Highland fling.

We cannot but remember such things were,
And were most dear to us !

Hay harvest, too, had its soft and delicate tints, resembling those of the grain harvest. As the upper rainbow curves and glows with fainter colouring around the interior and the brighter, so did the hay harvest of yore anticipate and prefigure, as it were, the other. The hay tedded to the sun ; the bare-footed lass, her locks floating in the breeze, her cheeks redolent of youth, and her eyes of joy, scattering or collecting, carting or ricking, the sweetly-scented meadow produce, under a June sun and a blue sky !

Oh, to feel as I have felt,
Or be what I have been !—

the favoured lover, namely, of that youthful purity, now in its fourteenth summer—myself as pure and all unthinking of aught but affection the most intense, and feelings the most soft and unaccountable.

Ah, little did thy mother think,
That day she cradled thee,
What lands thou hadst to travel in,
What death thou hadst to see !

Poor Jeanie Johnston ! I have seen her, only a few weeks ago, during the sittings of the General Assembly, sunk in poverty, emaciated by disease, the wife of an old soldier, himself disabled from work, tenanting a dark hovel in Pipe's Close, Castlehill of Edinburgh.

In the upper district of Dumfries-shire—the land of my birth, and of all those early associations which cling to me as the mistletoe to the oak, and which are equally hallowed with that druidical excrescence—there are no coals, but a superabundance of moss ; consequently peat-fires are very generally still, and were, at the time of which I speak, universally, made use of ; and a peat-fire, on a cold, frosty night of winter, when every star is glinting and

goggling through the blue, or when the tempest raves, and

There's no a star in a' the cary,

is by no means to be despised. To be sure, it is short-lived—but then it kindles soon ; it does not, it is true, entertain us with fantastic and playful jets of flame—but then its light is full, united, and steady ; the heat which it sends out on all sides is superior to that of coals. Wood is sullen and sulky, whether in its log or faggot form. It eats away into itself, in a cancer ignition. But the blazing peat—

The bleezing ingle, and the clean hearth-stane—is the very soul of cheerfulness and comfort. But then peats must be prepared. They do not grow in hedges, nor vegetate in meadows. They must be cut from the black and consolidated moss ; and a peculiarly-constructed spade, with a sharpe edge and crooked ear, must be made use of for that purpose ; and into the field of operation must be brought, at casting-time, the spademen, with their spades ; and the barrowmen, and women, boys, and girls, with their barrows ; and the breakfast sowans, with their creamy milk, cut and crossed into circles and squares ; and the dinner stew, with its sappy potatoes and gusty-onioned mutton fragments ; and the rest at noon, with its active sports and feats of agility ; and, in particular, with its jumps from the moss-brow into the soft, marshy substance beneath—and *thereby hangs my tale*, which shall be as short and simple as possible.

One of the loveliest visions of my boyhood is Nancy Morrison. She was a year or so older than me ; but we went and returned from school together. She was the only daughter of a poor widow woman, who supported herself in a romantic glen on the skirts of the Queensberry Hills, by bleaching or whitening webs. In those days, the alkalies and acids had not yet superseded the slower progress of whitening

green linen by soap-boiling, trampling, and alternate drying in the sun, and wetting with pure running water. Many is the time and oft that Nanny and I have wielded the watering-pan, in this fairy, sunny glen, all day long. Whilst the humble-bee boomed past us, the mavis occupied the thorn-tree, and the mother of Nanny employed herself in some more laborious department of the same process, Nanny and I have set us down on the greensward—*in tenaci gramine*—played at chucks, “head him and cross him,” or some such amusement. At school, Nanny had ever a faithful defender and avenger in me; and I have even purloined apples and gooseberries from the castle garden—and all for the love I bore “to my Nanny, oh !”

I know not that any one has rightly described a first love. It is not the love of man and woman, though that be fervent and terrible ; it is not the love of mere boy and girlhood, though that be disinterested and engrossing ; but it is the love of the period of life which unites the two. “Is there a man whose blood is warm within him” who does not recollect it ? Is there a woman who has passed through the novitiate of fifteen, who has not still a distinct impression of the feeling of which I speak ? It is not sexual, and yet it can only exist betwixt the sexes. It is the sweetest delusion under which the soul of a created being can pass. It is modest, timid, retiring, bashful ; yet, in absence of the adored—in seclusion, in meditation, and in dreams—it is bold, resolute, and determined. There is no plan, no design, no right conception of cause ; yet the effect is sure and the bliss perfect. Oh, for one hour—one little hour—from the thousands which I have idled, sported, dreamed away in the company of my darling school-companion, Nancy !

Will Mather was about two years older than Nancy—a fine youth, attend-

ing the same school, and evidently an admirer of Nancy. Mine was the love of comparative boyhood ; but his was a passion gradually ripening (as the charms of Nancy budded into womanhood) into a manly and matrimonial feeling. I loved the girl merely as such—his eye, his heart, his whole soul were in his future bride. Marriage in no shape ever entered into my computations ; but his eager look and heaving bosom bespoke the definite purpose—the anticipated felicity. I don’t know exactly why, but I was never jealous of Will Mather. We were companions ; and he was high-souled and generous, and stood my friend in many perilous quarrels. I knew that my pathway in life was to be afar from that in which Nancy and Will were likely to walk ; and I felt in my heart that, dear as this beautiful rosebud was to me, I was not *man* enough—I was not *peasant* enough to wear it in my bosom. Had Nancy on any occasion turned round to be kissed by me, I would have fled over muir and dale to avoid her presence ; and yet I had often a great desire to obtain that favour. Once, indeed, and only once, did I obtain, or rather steal it. She was sitting beside a bird’s nest, the young ones of which she was feeding and cherishing—for the parent birds, by the rapacity of a cat, had recently perished. As the little bills were expanding to receive their food, her countenance beamed with pity and benevolence. I never saw even *her* so lovely ; so, in a moment, I had her round the neck, and clung to her lips with the tenacity of a creature drowning. But, feeling at once the awkwardness of my position, I took to my heels, becoming immediately invisible amidst the surrounding brushwood.

Such was Will Mather, and such was Nancy Morrison, at the period of which I am speaking. We must now advance about two or three years in our chronology, and find Will possessed of

a piece of information which bore materially on his future fortunes. Will was an illegitimate child. His mother had kept the secret so well that he did not know his father, though he had frequently urged her to reveal to him privately all that she knew of his parentage. In conversing, too, with Nancy, his now affianced bride, he had expressed similar wishes; whilst she, with a becoming and feminine modesty, had urged him not to press an aged parent on so delicate a point. At last the old woman was taken seriously ill, and, on her death-bed and at midnight, revealed to her son the secret of his birth. He was the son of a proprietor in the parish, and a much-respected man. The youth, so soon as he had closed his mother's eyes, hurried off, amidst the darkness, to the abode of his father, and, entering by a window, was in his father's bed-chamber and over his body ere he was fully awake.

"John Scott!" said the son, in a firm and terrible tone, grasping his parent meantime convulsively round the neck, "John Scott of Auchincleuch, I am thy son!"

The conscience-stricken culprit, being taken by surprise, and almost imagining this a supernatural intimation from Heaven, exclaimed, in trembling accents:

"But who are you that makes this averment?"

"I am thy son, father—oh, I am thy son!"

Will could say no more; for his heart was full, and his tears dropped hot and heavy on a father's face.

"Yes," replied the parent, after a convulsive solemn sob—(O Heaven! thou art just!)—"yes, thou *art* indeed my son—my long-denied and ill-used boy—whom the fear of the world's scorn has tempted me, against all the yearnings of my better nature, to use so unjustly. But come to my bosom—to a father's bosom *now*, for I know that voice too well to distrust thee."

In a few months after this interesting disclosure, John Scott was numbered with his fathers, and Will Scott (no longer Mather) became Laird of Auchincleuch.

Poor Nancy was at first somewhat distressed at this discovery, which put her betrothed in a position to expect a higher or genteeler match. But there was no cause of alarm. Will was true to the backbone, and would as soon have burned his Bible as have sacrificed his future bride. After much pressing for an early day on the part of the lover, it was agreed, at last, that the marriage should take place at "Peat-casting Time," and that Nancy should, for the last time, assist at the casting of her mother's peats.

I wish I could stop here, or at least proceed to give you an account of the happy nuptials of Will Scott and Nancy Morrison, the handsomest couple in the parish of Closeburn. But it may not be! These eyes, which are still filled (though it is forty-eight years since) with tears, and this pen, which trembles as I proceed, must attest and record the catastrophe.

Nancy, the beautiful bride, and I (for I was now on the point of leaving school for college) agreed to have a jump for the last time (often had we jumped before) from a suitable moss-brow.

"My frolicsome days will sune be ower," she cried, laughing; "the Gude-wife of Auchincleuch will hae something else to do than jump frae the moss-brow; and, while my name is Nancy Morrison, I'll hail the dules, or jump wi' the best o' my auld playmates."

"Weel dune, Nancy!" cried I; "you are now to be the wife o' the Laird o' Auchincleuch, when your jumping days will be at an end; and I am soon to be sent to college, where the only jump I may get may be from the top of a pile of old black-letter folios—

no half sae gude a point of advantage as the moss-brow."

"There's the Laird o' Auchincleuch coming," cried Peggy Chalmers, one of the peat-casters, who was standing aside, along with several others. "He's nae langer the daft Will Mather, wha liked a jump as weel as the blithest swankie o' the barnyard. Siller maks sair changes; and yet, wha wad exchange the Will Scott of Auchincleuch, your rich bridegroom, Nancy, for the Will Mather, your auld lover? Dinna tempt Providence, my hinny! The laird winna like to see his bride jumpin frae knowe to knowe like a daft giglet, within a week o' her marriage."

"Tout!" cried Nancy, bursting out into a loud laugh; "see, he's awa round by the Craw Plantin, and winna see us—and whar's the harm if he did? Come now, Tammie, just ae spring and the last, and I'll wad ye my kame against your cravat, that I beat ye by the length o' my marriage slipper."

"Weel dune, Nancy!" cried several of the peat-casters, who, leaning on their spades, stood and looked at us with pleasure and approbation.

The Laird had, as Nancy said, crossed over by what was called the Craw Plantin, and was now out of sight. To make the affair more ludicrous (for we were all bent on fun), Nancy took out, from among her high-built locks of auburn hair, her comb—a present from her lover—and impledged it in the hands of Billy Watson, along with my cravat, which I had taken off, and handed to the umpire.

"Here is a better moss-brow," cried one, at a distance.

And so to be sure it was, for it was much higher than the one we had fixed upon, and the landing-place was soft and elastic. Our practice was, always to jump together, so that the points of the toes could be measured when both the competitors' feet were still fixed in the moss. We mounted the moss-

brow. I was in high spirits, and Nancy could scarcely contain herself for pure, boisterous, laughing glee. I went off, but the mad girl could not follow, for she was still holding her sides, and laughing immoderately. I asked her what she laughed at. She could not tell. She was under the influence of one of those extraordinary cachinations that sometimes convulse our diaphragms, without our being able to tell why, and certainly without our being able to put a stop to them. Her face was flushed, and the fire of her glee shone bright in her eye. I took my position again.

"Now!" cried I; and away we flew, and stuck deeply in the soft and spongy moss.

I stood with my feet in the ground, that the umpire might come and mark the distance. A loud scream broke on my ear. I looked round, and, dreadful sight! I saw Nancy lying extended on the ground, with the blood pouring out at her mouth in a large stream! She had burst a blood-vessel. The fit of laughing which preceded her effort to leap had, in all likelihood, distended her delicate veins, and predisposed her to the unhappy result.

The loud scream had attracted the notice of the bridegroom, who came running from the back of the Craw Plantin. The sight appalled and stupefied him. He cried for explanation, and ran forward to his dead or dying bride, in wild confusion. Several voices essayed an explanation, but none were intelligible. I was as unable as the rest to satisfy the unhappy man; but, though we could not speak intelligibly, we could act, and several of us lifted her up. This step sealed her fate. The change in her position produced another stream of blood. She opened her eyes once, and fixed them for a moment on Will Scott. She then closed them, and for ever.

I saw poor Nancy carried home.

Will Scott, who upheld her head, fainted before he proceeded twenty yards, and I was obliged to take his place. I was almost as unfit for the task as himself; for I reproached myself as the cause of her death. I have lived long. Will the image of that procession ever pass from my mind? The blood-stained moss-ground, the bleeding body, the trailing clothes, the unbound locks, are all before me. I can proceed no further. Would that I could stop the current of my thoughts as easily

as that of this feathered chronicler of sorrow! But—

There is a silent sorrow here,
A grief I'll ne'er impart;
It breathes no sigh, it sheds no tear,
But it consumes my heart.

I have taken up my pen to add, that Will Mather still remains a bachelor, and that on every visit I make to Dumfriesshire, I take my dinner, *solus cum solo*, at Auchincleuch, and that many tears are annually shed, over a snug bottle, for poor Nancy.

AN ADVENTURE WITH THE PRESS-GANG.

How goes the press? was, as usual, our first and most anxious inquiry when the pilot boat came alongside to the westward of Lundy Island. The brief but emphatic reply was, "As hot as blazes." Knowing therefore what we had to expect, the second mate and I, and one or two others, applied to the captain to set us ashore at Ilfracomb, but he would not listen to us. A double-reefed topsail breeze was blowing from the westward, and a vigorous flood-tide was setting up channel, enabling us to pass over the ground about fifteen knots. Such advantages the captain was no way disposed to forego, so that there was nothing for us but to trust to Providence and our stow holes. The breeze flagged towards sunset, and it was not until an hour after dusk that we dropped anchor in Kingroad.

As soon as the ship was brought up, I stepped in the main rigging to lend a hand to furl the topsail, but had not reached the top, when I heard the cabin boy calling out in an Irish whisper, "Bóbstay, down, down, the press-boat is alongside." I was on deck in a twinkling, and was springing to the after scuttle, when I found myself

seized violently by the arm. I trembled. It was the same boy that had called me down. "They are already in the mizen chains," said he; "to the fore scuttle, or you are a gone man."

Down the fore peak I went with the rapidity of lightning, and down jumped three of the gang after me with little less velocity.

"Oho, my tight little fellow," said one of them, thrusting his cutlass down a crevice over my head; "I see you; out you must come, or here goes an inch or two of cold steel into your breadbag."

I knew well that I was beyond his reach, and took care to let him have all the talk to himself. They rummaged about all over the hold, thrusting their cutlasses down every chink they could perceive, but no one could they find give a single squeak. In about half an hour I heard the well-known voice of the cabin boy calling me on deck. On reaching the deck, I found that the gang had carried off three of our hands, and had expressed their determination to renew their search next day. Of course my grand object was to get ashore without delay. The moment we anchored, the captain had

gone off to Bristol to announce his arrival to his owners ; and as the mate and I were not on good terms, he refused to allow me the use of the ship's boat. None of the watermen whose boats we hailed would come alongside, because if they had been found assisting the crew of merchant vessels to escape the press, they themselves would have been subjected to its grasp. About midnight, however, one waterman came alongside, with whom the love of money overcame the fear of danger, and he agreed to pull the second mate, boatswain, and myself ashore, for half a guinea each. I had brought from the West Indies a small venture in sugar, a cask of which, about a hundredweight, I took into the boat with me, to clear present expenses.

Shortly after we had shov'd off, we found ourselves chased by a long boat, which the waterman knew, by the sound of the oars, to be the guard-boat. How we did pull ! But it seemed in vain ; we found it would be impossible to reach the landing-place, so we pulled for the nearest point of land. The moment the boat touched the ground, I took the cask of sugar on my shoulder, and expecting solid ground under the boat's bows, jumped ashore. Instead of solid ground, I found myself above the knees in mud. The guard-boat was within a hundred yards of the shore, and what was to be done ! All that a man has will he give for his liberty, so away went the cask of sugar. Thus lightened, I soon scrambled out, when the three of us scampered off as fast as it was possible for feet to carry us. What became of the waterman, or his boat, or my cask of sugar, we never knew ; nor did we think of stopping to breathe or look round us, till we reached the town of Peel, where by a blazing fire and over a dish of beef-steaks, and a few tankards of brown stout, we soon forgot our dangers and our fears.

Our residence here, as far as liberty

was concerned, was pretty nearly on a par with prison residence. The second mate and I lodged together, and during daylight we never durst show our faces, except, perhaps, between four and six in the morning, when we sometimes took a ramble in a neighbouring burying-ground, to read epitaphs ; and this, from the love of the English to poetical ones, was equivalent to the loan of a volume of poetry. But Time's pinions seemed in our eyes loaded with lead, and we were often inclined to sing with the plaintive swain,

Ah ! no, soft and slow
The time it winna pass,
The shadow of the trysting thorn,
Is tether'd on the grass.

And had it not been for the kindly attentions of our landlord's two handsome daughters, to whose eyebrows we indited stanzas, I know not how we would have got the time killed.

Snug as we thought ourselves, the press-gang had by some means or other been put on the scent, and one day very nearly pounced on us. So cautious had they been in their visit, that their approach was not perceived until they were actually in the kitchen. Fortunately we were at this time in an upper room, and one of the daughters rightly judging of the purpose of their visit, flew upstairs to warn us of our danger, and point out a place of safety. This place was above the ceiling, and the only access to it was through a hole in the wall a little way up the vent. It was constructed as a secure place to lodge a little brandy or geneva, that sometimes found its way to the house, without having been polluted with the excise-man's rod. It was excellently adapted to our purpose, and the entrance to it was speedily pointed out by our pretty little guardian angel. Up the vent we sprung like a brace of chimney sweeps, and had scarcely reached our place of concealment, when the gang rushed upstairs, burst open the door, and began

to rummage every corner of the room. The bed was turned out, the presses all minutely examined, and even the vent itself underwent a scrutiny, but no seamen could be found.

"Tell us, my young lady, whereabout you havestowed away them there fellows, for we knows they are in the house?"

"What fellows?" said the dear little girl, with a composure which we thought it impossible for her to assume so soon after her violent trepidation.

"Why, them there fellows as came ashore from one of the West Indiamen t'other day; we knows they are here, and are determined to have 'em."

"You have certainly been misinformed," said she; "you are welcome to search the house, but be assured you will find no such men here."

"Come, come, my little fair un, that is all in my eye and Betty Martin. Here they are, this is certain, and we are determined to make our quarters good till we find them out;" and away they went to search the other apartments of the house.

Meanwhile our charming little protectress, alarmed at the threatened siege, and fearing that we would be starved into a surrender, took the opportunity, while the gang were rummaging the parlour and some other bedrooms, to supply our garrison with provisions. A basket with boiled ham, a couple of capons, a household loaf of ample dimensions, half-a-dozen of brown stout, the family bottle of excellent stingo, and a can of water, were expeditiously handed up the vent. This supply set our minds quite at ease, as we knew it would enable us to stand a week's close siege. Our patience, however, was not put to this trial, for the gang, after a two hours' vigilant search, abandoned their pursuit in despair, and departed.

We could not, of course, think of venturing up to Bristol to look after our wages, so we employed our landlord to perform this duty. After a good many

vexatious delays, we succeeded in getting our money, paid off all scores, and began to think how we were to dispose of ourselves. My companion Lindsay was so deeply smitten with the charms of one of the youthful sirens, that he found it impossible to depart; and I had to concert all my future projects alone, and leave him bound in Cupid's silken chain.

My blue jacket and fringed dimity trousers, my check shirt and scarlet vest, were at once discarded, and their places supplied by articles of a more landward appearance. I knew that it would be impossible to travel the country safely in seaman's dress, so I determined to try my fortune as a beau. The body of Bill Bobstay incased in a ruffled shirt, silk vest, white stockings, breeches buttoned at the knees, and a swallow-tailed coat, presented such a curious spectacle, that he himself could scarcely help laughing at it, and it seemed to produce the same effects on the landlord's daughter, as she with a witching smile chucked up my chin, until she arranged the bights and ends of my white neckcloth, according to the most approved form. She took as long to perform this little office as I could have rigged *in toto*, and seamen are never backward in acts of courtesy, when the ladies are concerned. Her ruby lips were all the while within marlingspike's length of my own, and how could I avoid saluting them?

Thus equipped, I set out on foot for Bath, but as I had no business to perform in that city of invalidated nabobs, I immediately took coach for London, and after travelling all night, I, on awaking from a short nap, found myself rattling over the stones at Hyde Park corner.

My object was to procure a passage to the northward, in one of the Leith or Berwick smacks, and I expected in eight or ten days, after an absence of as many years, to set foot once more on my native soil. As soon therefore as the

coach stopped in Piccadilly, I alighted, and knowing the bearing by compass of London Bridge, I, without waiting to breakfast, winded my way through the Haymarket, past Charing Cross, along the Strand, Fleet Street, and Ludgate Hill, till I arrived at St Paul's. From this point I took a fresh departure, and holding as nearly as cross streets would admit, a south-easterly course, gained Thames Street, and soon found myself in the vicinity of the Tower.

Smartly as I had moved my body along, my imagination, as is usual with me, had got a long way a-head. It had obtained a passage, secured a fair wind, landed me on the pier of Leith, and was arranging my introductory visit to my friends, so as to produce the greatest sum of agreeable surprise. But there is much, says the old proverb, between the cup and the lip. In the midst of this agreeable reverie, as I was crossing Tower Hill, I found myself tapped on the shoulder, and on looking round, was accosted by a man in seaman's dress in the words, "What ship?" I assumed an air of gravity and surprise, and told him I apprehended he was under some mistake, as my business did not lie among shipping. But the fellow was too well acquainted with his business to be thus easily put off. He gave a whistle, the sound of which still vibrates in my ear, and in a moment I was surrounded by half-a-dozen ruffians, whom I immediately suspected, and soon found out to be the press-gang. They dragged me hurriedly through several lanes and alleys, amid the mingled sympathy and execrations of a numerous crowd, which had collected to witness my fate, and soon landed me in the rendezvous. I was immediately ushered into the presence of the lieutenant of the gang, who questioned me as to my name, country, profession, and what business had led me to Tower Hill. Totally unexpecting any such interruption, I had not thought of concocting

any plausible story, and my answers were evasive and contradictory. I did not acknowledge having been at sea; but my hands were examined, found hard with work, and discoloured with tar. This circumstance condemned me, and I was remanded for further examination.

Some of the gang then offered me spirits, affected to pity me, and pretended to comfort me under my misfortune, but like the comforters of Job, miserable comforters were they all. The very scoundrel who first seized me put on a sympathising look, and observed what a pity it was to be disappointed when so near the object of my wishes. Such sympathy from such a source was truly provoking; but having no way of showing my resentment, I was constrained to smother it.

In a short time I was reconducted into the presence of the lieutenant, who told me, as I was already in his hands, and would assuredly be kept, I might as well make a frank confession of my circumstances. It would save time, and insure me better treatment. What could I do? I might indeed have continued silent and sullen, but of what service could this prove? It might, or might not, have procured me worse treatment, but one thing I knew well, it would not restore me to liberty. I therefore acknowledged that I had been a voyage to the West Indies, and had come home carpenter of a ship. His eye brightened at this intelligence.

"I am glad of this, my lad. We are very much in want of carpenters. Step along with these lads, and they will give you a passage aboard."

The same fellows who had first seized me led me along the way we came, handed me into a pinnace lying at Tower Wharf, and before mid-day I was safely handed on board the Enterprise.

What crosses and vexations, and reverses and disappointments, are we mortals destined to meet with in life's

tempestuous voyage ! At eight in the morning I entered London a free agent, elated with joy, and buoyed up with hope. At noon I entered a prison ship, a miserable slave, oppressed with sorrow, and ready to despair.

Despair, did I say ? No. I will have nothing to do with that disturber of human peace. When misfortune befalls us, we are not to sit down in despondency and sigh. Up and be doing, is the

wise man's maxim, and it was the maxim I was resolved to observe. What befell me on my arrival on board the Enterprise, what reception I met with, and what mirth I excited as I was lowered into the press-room, with my short breeches and swallow-tailed coat—what measures I exerted to regain my liberty, and what success attended these measures—the space at my disposal prevents me setting forth.—*Paisley Magazine.*

THE LAIRD OF COOL'S GHOST.

UPON the 3d day of February 1722 at seven o'clock in the evening, after I had parted with Thurston, and coming up the burial road, one came up riding after me. Upon hearing the noise of the horse's feet, I took it to be Thurston ; but looking back, and seeing the horse of a gray colour, I called, "Who's there ?" The answer was, "The Laird of Cool ; be not afraid." Looking to him with the little light the moon afforded, I took him to be Collector Castle-law, who had a mind to put a trick upon me, and immediately I struck with all my force with my cane, thinking I would leave a mark upon him that would make him remember his presumption ; but although sensible I aimed as well as ever I did in my life, yet my cane finding no resistance, but flying out of my hand to the distance of sixty feet, and observing it by its white head, I dismounted and took it up, but had some difficulty in mounting again, partly by reason of a certain sort of trembling throughout my whole joints, something also of anger had its share in my confusion ; for though he laughed when my staff flew out of my hand, coming up with him again (who halted all the time I was seeking my staff), I asked him once more who he was? He answered, "The Laird of Cool."

I inquired, first, if he was the Laird of Cool ; secondly, what brought him thither ? and thirdly, what was his business with me ? He answered, "The reason that I want you is, that I know you are disposed to do for me what none of your brethren in Nithsdale will so much as attempt, though it serve never so good a purpose. I told him I would never refuse to do anything to serve a good purpose, if I thought I was obliged to do it as my duty. He answered, that I had undertaken what few in Nithsdale would, for he had tried several persons on that subject, who were more obliged to him than I was to any person living. Upon this I drew my bridle reins, and asked in surprise, what I had undertaken ? He answered, "That on Sabbath last, I heard you condemned Mr Paton, and the other ministers of Dumfries, for dissuading Mr Menzies from keeping his appointment with me ; and if you had been in their place, would have persuaded the lad to do as I desired, and that you would have gone with him yourself, if he had been afraid ; and if you had been in Mr Paton's place, you would have delivered my commissions yourself, as they tended to do several persons justice." I asked him, "Pray, Cool, who informed

you that I talked at that rate?" to which he answered, "You must know that we are acquainted with many things that the living know nothing about; these things you did say, and much more to that purpose, and deliver my commissions to my loving wife." Upon this I said, "'Tis a pity, Cool, that you who know so many things should not know the difference between an absolute and conditional promise; I did, indeed, at the time you mention, blame Mr Paton, for I thought him justly blamable, in hindering the lad to meet with you, and if I had been in his place, I would have acted quite the reverse; but I did never say, that if you would come to Innerwick and employ me, that I would go all the way to Dumfries on such an errand; that is what never so much as entered into my thoughts." He answered, "What were your thoughts I don't pretend to know, but I can depend on my information these were your words. But I see you are in some disorder; I will wait upon you when you have more presence of mind."

By this time we were at James Dickson's enclosure, below the churchyard; and when I was recollecting in my mind, if ever I had spoken these words he alleged, he broke off from me through the churchyard, with greater violence than any man on horseback is capable of, with such a singing and buzzing noise, as put me in greater disorder than I was in all the time I was with him. I came to my house, and my wife observed more than ordinary palleness in my countenance, and alleged that something ailed me. I called for a dram, and told her I was a little uneasy. After I found myself a little refreshed, I went to my closet to meditate on this most astonishing adventure.

Upon the 5th of March 1722, being at Harehead, baptizing the shepherd's child, I came off about sunsetting, and near William White's march, the Laird of Cool came up with me as formerly; and

after his first salutation bade me not be afraid. I told him I was not in the least afraid, in the name of God and Christ my Saviour, that he would do me the least harm; for I knew that He in whom I trusted was stronger than all they put together; and if any of them should attempt to do, even to the horse that I ride upon, as you have done to Doctor Menzies' man, I have free access to complain to my Lord and Master, to the lash to whose resentment you are as liable now as before.

Cool. You need not multiply words on that head, for you are safe with me; and safer, if safer can be, than when I was alive.

Ogil. Well then, Cool, let me have a peaceable and easy conversation with you for the time we ride together, and give me some information concerning the affairs of the other world, for no man inclines to lose his time in conversing with the dead, without hearing or learning something useful.

Cool. Well, sir, I will satisfy you as far as I think proper and convenient. Let me know what information you want.

Ogil. May I then ask you, if you be in a state of happiness or not?

Cool. There are a great many things I can answer that the living are ignorant of; there are a great many things that, notwithstanding the additional knowledge I have acquired since my death, I cannot answer; and there are a great many questions you may start, of which the last is one that I will not answer.

Ogil. Then I know how to manage our conversation; whatever I inquire of you, I see you can easily shift me; to that I might profit more by conversing with myself.

Cool. You may try.

Ogil. Well, then, what sort of a body is that you appear in; and what sort of a horse is that you ride upon, which appears to be so full of mettle?

Cool. You may depend upon it, it is not the same body that I was witness to your marriage in, nor in which I died, for that is in the grave rotting ; but it is such a body as serves me in a moment, for I can fly as fleet with it as my soul can do without it ; so that I can go to Dumfries, and return again, before you can ride twice the length of your horse ; nay, if I have a mind to go to London, or Jerusalem, or to the moon, if you please, I can perform all these journeys equally soon, for it costs me nothing but a thought or wish : for this body is as fleet as your thought, for in the moment of time you can turn your thoughts on Rome, I can go there in person ; and as for my horse, he is much like myself, for he is Andrew Johnston, my tenant, who died forty-eight hours before me.

Ogil. So it seems when Andrew Johnston inclines to ride, you must serve him in the quality of a horse, as he does you now.

Cool. You are mistaken.

Ogil. I thought that all distinctions between mistresses and maids, lairds and tenants, had been done away at death.

Cool. True it is, but you do not take up the matter.

Ogil. This is one of the questions you won't answer.

Cool. You are mistaken, for the question I can answer, and after you may understand it.

Ogil. Well then, Cool, have you never yet appeared before God, nor received any sentence from Him as a Judge ?

Cool. Never yet.

Ogil. I know you was a scholar, Cool, and 'tis generally believed there is a private judgment, besides the general at the great day, the former immediately after death. Upon this he interrupted me, arguing.

Cool. No such thing, no such thing ! No trial ; no trial till the great day ! The heaven which good men enjoy after death consists only in the serenity of

their minds, and the satisfaction of a good conscience ; and the certain hopes they have of eternal joy, when that day shall come. The punishment or hell of the wicked, immediately after death, consists in the stings of an awakened conscience, and the terrors of facing the great Judge, and the sensible apprehensions of eternal torments ensuing ! And this bears still a due proportion to the evils they did when living. So indeed the state of some good folks differ but little in happiness from what they enjoyed in the world, save only that they are free from the body, and the sins and sorrows that attended it. On the other hand, there are some who may be said rather not to have been good, than that they are wicked ; while living, their state is not easily distinguished from that of the former ; and under that class comes a great herd of souls—a vast number of ignorant people, who have not much minded the affairs of eternity, but at the same time have lived in much indolence, ignorance, and innocence.

Ogil. I thought that their rejecting the terms of salvation offered was sufficient ground for God to punish them with eternal displeasure ; and as to their ignorance, that could never excuse them, since they live in a place of the world where the true knowledge of these things might have been easily attained.

Cool. They never properly rejected the terms of salvation ; they never, strictly speaking, rejected Christ ; poor souls, they had as great a liking both to Him and heaven, as their gross imaginations were capable of. Impartial reason must make many allowances, as the stupidity of their parents, want of education, distance from people of good sense and knowledge, and the uninterrupted applications they were obliged to give to their secular affairs for their daily bread, the impious treachery of their pastors, who persuaded them, that if they were of such a party all was well ; and many other considerations which

God, who is pure and perfect reason it-self, will not overlook. These are not so much under the load of Divine displeasure, as they are out of His grace and favour ; and you know it is one thing to be discouraged, and quite another thing to be persecuted with all the power and rage of an incensed earthly king. I assure you, men's faces are not more various and different in the world, than their circumstances are after death.

Ogil. I am loath to believe all that you have said at this time, *Cool* (but I will not dispute those matters with you), because some things you have advanced seem to contradict the Scriptures, which I shall always look upon as the infallible truth of God. For I find, in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, that the one was immediately after death carried up by the angels into Abraham's bosom, and the other immediately thrust down to hell.

Cool. Excuse me, sir, that does not contradict one word that I have said ; but you seem not to understand the parable, whose only end is to illustrate the truth, that a man may be very happy and flourishing in this world, and wretched and miserable in the next ; and that a man may be miserable in this world, and happy and glorious in the next.

Ogil. Be it so, *Cool*, I shall yield that point to you, and pass to another, which has afforded me much speculation since our last encounter ; and that is, How you came to know that I talked after the manner that I did concerning Mr Paton, on the first Sabbath of February last ? Was you present with me, but invisible ? He answered very haughtily, No, sir, I was not present myself. I answered, I would not have you angry, *Cool*. I proposed this question for my own satisfaction ; but if you don't think proper to answer, let it pass. After he had paused, with his eyes on the ground, for three or four minutes of time at most, with some haste and seeming cheerfulness, he says—

Cool. Well, sir, I will satisfy you in that point. You must know that there are sent from heaven angels to guard and comfort, and to do other good services to good people, and even the spirits of good men departed are employed in that errand.

Ogil. And do you not think that every man has a good angel ?

Cool. No, but a great many particular men have : there are but few houses of distinction especially, but what have at least one attending them ; and from what you have already heard of spirits, it is no difficult matter to understand how they may be serviceable to each particular member, though at different places at a great distance. Many are the good offices which the good angels do to them that fear God, though many times they are not sensible of it : and I know assuredly, that one powerful angel, or even an active clever soul departed, may be sufficient for some villages ; but for your great cities, such as London, Edinburgh, or the like, there is one great angel that has the superintendence of the whole ; and there are inferior angels, or souls departed, to whose particular care such a man, of such a particular weight or business, is committed. Now, sir, the kingdom of Satan does ape the kingdom of Christ as much in matters of politics as can be, well knowing that the court of wisdom is from above ; so that from thence are sent out missionaries in the same order. But because the kingdom of Satan is much better replenished than the other, instead of one devil there are in many instances two or three commissioned to attend a particular family of influence and distinction.

Ogil. I read that there are ten thousand times ten thousand of angels that wait upon God, and sing His praise and do His will ; and I cannot understand how the good angels can be inferior in number to the evil.

Cool. Did not I say, that whatever the

number be, the spirits departed are employed in the same business ; so that as to the number of original deities, whereof Satan is chief, I cannot determine, but you need not doubt but there are more souls departed in that place, which in a loose sense you call hell, by almost an infinity, than what are gone to that place, which, in a like sense, you call heaven, which likewise are employed in the same purpose ; and I can assure you that there is as great a difference between angels, both good and bad, as there is among men, with respect to their sense, knowledge, cunning, cleverness, and action ; nay, which is more, the departed souls on both sides outdo severals, from their very first departure, of the original angels. This you will perhaps think a paradox, but is true.

Ogil. I do not doubt it ; but what is that to my question, about which I am solicitous ?

Cool. Take a little patience, sir ; from what I have said you might have understood me, if you had your thoughts about you ; but I shall explain myself to you. Both the good and the bad angels have stated times of rendezvous, and the principal angels, who have the charge either of towns, cities, or kingdoms, not to mention particular persons, villages, and families, and all that is transacted in these several parts of the country, are there made open ; and at their re-encounter on each side, every thing is told, as in your parish, in milns, kilns, and smithies, with this difference, that many things false are talked at the living re-encounters, but nothing but what is exact truth is said or told among the dead ; only I must observe to you, that, as I am credibly informed, several of the inferior bad angels, and souls of wicked men departed, have told many things that they have done, and then when a more intelligent spirit is sent out upon inquiry, and the report of the former seeming doubtful, he brings in a contrary report, and makes it appear

truth, the former fares very ill : nevertheless their regard to truth prevents it ; for while they observe the truth, they do their business and keep their station, for God is truth.

Ogil. So much truth being among the good angels, I am apt to think that lies and falsehood will be as much in vogue among the bad.

Cool. A gross mistake, and it is not alone the mistake which the living folks fall under with respect to the other world ; for the case plainly is this : an ill man will not stick at a falsehood to promote his design ; as little will an evil soul departed stop at anything that can make himself successful ; but in admitting report he must tell the truth, or woe be to him. But besides their monthly, quarterly, or yearly meetings, or whatever they be, departed souls acquainted may take a trip to see one another yearly, weekly, daily, or oftener, if they please. Thus, then, I answer your question that you was so much concerned about ; for my information was from no less than three persons, viz., Aikman, who attends Thurston's family ; James Corbet, who waits upon Mr Paton ; for at that time he was then looking after Mrs Sarah Paton, who was at your house, and an original emissary appointed to wait upon yours.

At this I was much surprised, and after a little thinking, I asked him, And is their really, Cool, an emissary from hell, in whatever sense you take it, that attends my family ?

Cool. You may depend upon it.

Ogil. And what do you think is his business ?

Cool. To divert you from your duty, and cause you to do as many ill things as he can ; for much depends on having the minister on their side.

Upon this I was struck with a sort of terror, which I cannot account for. In the meantime he said several things I did not understand. But after coming

to my former presence of mind, said—

Ogil. But, Cool, tell me, in earnest, if there be a devil that attends my family, though invisible.

Cool. Just as sure as you are breathing ; but be not so much dejected upon this information, for I tell you likewise that there is a good angel who attends you, who is stronger than the other.

Ogil. Are you sure of that, Cool ?

Cool. Yes ; there is one riding on your right hand, who might as well have been elsewhere, for I meant you no harm.

Ogil. And how long has he been with me ?

Cool. Only since we passed Brand's Lee, but now he is gone.

Ogil. We are just upon Elenscleugh, and I desire to part with you, though perhaps I have gained more by conversation than I could have otherwise done in a twelvemonth. I choose rather to see you another time, when you're at leisure, and I wish it were at as great a distance from Innerwick as you can.

Cool. Be it so, sir ; but I hope you will be as obliging to me next re-encounter, as I have been to you this.

Ogil. I promise you I will, as far as is consistent with my duty to my Lord and Master Christ Jesus ; and since you have obliged me so much by information, I will answer all the questions you propose, as far as consists with my knowledge ; but I believe you want no information from me.

Cool. I came not here to be instructed by you, but I want your help of another kind.

Upon the 5th of April 1722, as I was returning from Old Hamstocks, Cool came up with me on horseback at the foot of the ruinous enclosure, before we came to Dod. I told him his last conversation had proved so acceptable to me, that I was well pleased to see him again ; that there was a number of things that I wanted to inform myself

further of, if he would be so good as satisfy me.

Cool. Last time we met, I refused you nothing you asked ; and now I expect that you shall refuse me nothing that I shall ask.

Ogil. Nothing, sir, that is in my power, or that I can do with safety to my reputation and character. What, then, are your demands ?

Cool. All that I desire of you is, that as you promised that on a Sabbath-day you would go to my wife, who now possesses all my effects, and tell her the following particulars—tell her in my name to rectify these matters :—First, That I was owing justly to Provost Crosby £50 Scots, and three years' interest, but on hearing of his death, my good-brother the Laird of C-l and I forged a discharge, narrated the bond, the sum, and other particulars, with this honourable clause, “And at the time it had fallen by, and could not be found ;” with an obligation on the provost's part to deliver up this bond as soon as he could hit upon it. And this discharge was dated three months before the provost's death. And when his son and successor, Andrew Crosby, wrote to me concerning this bond, I came to him and showed him the forged discharge, which silenced him ; so that I got up my bond without more ado. And when I heard of Robert Kennedy's death, with the same help of C-l, I got a bill upon him for £190, of which I got full and complete payment. C-l got the half. When I was at Dumfries, the same day that Robert Grier died, to whom I was owing an account of £36, C-l, my good-brother, was then at London ; and not being able of myself, being but a bad writer, to make out a discharge of the account, which I wanted, I met accidentally with one Robert Boyd, a poor writer lad in Dumfries ; I took him to Mrs Carnock's, and gave him a bottle of wine, and told him I had paid Thomas Grier's account,

but had neglected to get a discharge, and if he would help me to one I would reward him. He flew away from me in a great passion, saying, he would rather be hanged ; but if I had a mind for these things, I had better wait till C—I came home. This gave me great trouble, fearing what C—I and I had done formerly was no secret. I followed Boyd to the street, and made an apology, saying, I was jesting, commanding him for his honesty, and got his promise never to repeat what had passed. I sent for my Cousin B—m H—rie, your good-brother, who, with no difficulty, for a guinea and a half, undertook and performed all that I wanted ; and for a guinea more made me up a discharge for £200 Scots that I was owing to your father-in-law and his friend Mr Muirhead, which discharge I gave to John Ewart, when he desired the money ; and he, at my desire, produced it to you, which you sustained.

A great many of the like instances were told, of which I cannot remember the persons, names, and things ; but, says he, what vexes me more than all these, is the injustice I did Homer Maxwell, tenant to my Lord Nithsdale, for whom I was factor. I borrowed £2000 from him, £500 of which he borrowed from another hand : I gave him my bond, and, for reasons I contrived, I obliged him to secrecy. He died within the year, and left nine children, his wife being dead before himself. I came to seal up his papers for my lord's security ; his eldest daughter entreated me to look through them all, and to give her an account of what was their stock and what was their debt. I very willingly undertook it ; and in going through the papers, I put my own bond in my pocket. His circumstances proving bad, his nine children are now starving. These things I desire you to represent to my wife, and take her brother with you, and let them be immediately rectified, for she has a sufficient fund to do it upon ;

(12)

and if it were done, I think I would be easy, and therefore I hope you will make no delay.

After a short pause, I answered, 'Tis a good errand, Cool, you are sending me to do justice to the oppressed and injured ; but notwithstanding I see myself come in for £200 Scots, yet I beg a little time to consider the matter. And since I find you are as much master of reason now as ever, and more than ever, I will reason upon the matter in its general view, and then with respect to the expediency of my being the messenger ; and this I will do with all manner of frankness. From what you have said, I see clearly what your present condition is, so that I need not ask any more questions on that head ; and you need not bid me take courage, for at this moment I am no more afraid of you than a new-born child.

Cool. Well, say on.

Ogil. Tell me, then, since such is your ability that you can fly a thousand miles in the twinkling of an eye, if your desire to do the oppressed justice be as great as you pretend, what's the reason you don't fly to the coffers of some rich Jew or banker, where are thousands of gold and silver, invisibly lift, and invisibly return it to the coffers of the injured ? And since your wife has sufficient funds, and more, why cannot you empty her purse invisibly, to make these people amends ?

Cool. Because I cannot.

Ogil. You have satisfied me entirely upon that head. But pray, Cool, what is the reason that you cannot go to your wife yourself, and tell her what you have a mind ? I should think this a more sure way to gain your point.

Cool. Because I will not.

Ogil. That is not an answer to me, Cool.

Cool. That is one of the questions that I told you long ago I would not answer : but if you go as I desire, I promise to give you full satisfaction after you have

3 A

done your business. Trust me for once, and believe me I will not disappoint you.

Upon the 10th of April 1722, coming from Old Cambus, upon the post-road, I met with Cool on the head of the heath called the Pees. He asked me, if I had considered the matter he had recommended? I told him I had, and was in the same opinion I was in when we parted; that I would not possibly undertake his commissions, unless he could give me them in writing under his hand. I told him that the list of his grievances were so great that I could not possibly remember them without being put in writing; and that I wanted nothing but reason to determine me in that, and all other affairs of my life.

"I know," says he, "this is a mere evasion: but tell me if the Laird of Thurston will do it?"

"I am sure," said I, "he will not; and if he should, I would do all that I could to hinder him; for I think he has as little to do in these matters as myself. But tell me, Cool, is it not as easy to write your story as tell it, or ride on what-do-ye-call-him? for I have forgot your horse's name."

Cool. No, sir, it is not; and perhaps I may convince you of the reasonableness of it afterwards.

Ogil. I would be glad to hear a reason that is solid for not speaking to your wife yourself; but, however, any

rational creature may see what a fool I would make of myself, if I would go to Dumfries, and tell your wife you had appeared to me, and told so many forgeries and villanies that you had committed, and that she behoved to make reparation; the consequence might perhaps be, that she would scold me; for she would be loath to part with any money she possesses, and therefore tell me I was mad, or possibly pursue me for calumny. How would I vindicate myself; how could I prove that you ever spoke with me? Mr Paton and other ministers in Dumfries would tell me the devil had spoken with me; and why should I repeat these things for truth which he, that was a liar from the beginning, had told me? C—p—l and B—r—H—rie would be upon me, and pursue me before the commissary; everybody would look upon me as brain-sick or mad: therefore, I entreat you, do not insist upon sending me so ridiculous an errand. The reasonableness of my demands I leave to your own consideration, as you did your former to mine. But dropping the matter till our next interview, give me leave to enter upon some more diverting subject. I do not know, Cool, but the information you have given may do as much service to mankind, as the redress of all these grievances would amount to. Mr Ogilvie died very soon after.—*Old Chap B'ok.*

ALLAN-A-SOP.

BY SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THE MacLeans, a bold and hardy race, who, originally followers of the Lords of the Isles, had assumed independence, seized upon great part both of the Isle of Mull and the still more valuable island of Islay, and made war on the MacDonalds with various success.

There is a story belonging to this clan, which I may tell you, as giving another striking picture of the manners of the Hebrideans.

The chief of the clan, MacLean of Duart, in the Isle of Mull, had an intrigue with a beautiful young woman of

his own clan, who bore a son to him. In consequence of the child's being, by some accident, born on a heap of straw, he received the name of Allan-a-Sop, or Allan of the Straw, by which he was distinguished from others of his clan. As his father and mother were not married, Allan was, of course, a bastard, or natural son, and had no inheritance to look for, save that which he might win for himself.

But the beauty of the boy's mother having captivated a man of rank in the clan, called MacLean of Torloisk, he married her, and took her to reside with him at his castle of Torloisk, situated on the shores of the sound, or small strait of the sea, which divides the smaller island of Ulva from that of Mull. Allan-a-Sop paid his mother frequent visits at her new residence, and she was naturally glad to see the poor boy, both from affection, and on account of his personal strength and beauty, which distinguished him above other youths of his age. But she was obliged to confer marks of her attachment on him as privately as she could, for Allan's visits were by no means so acceptable to her husband as to herself. Indeed, Torloisk liked so little to see the lad, that he determined to put some affront on him, which should prevent his returning to the castle for some time. An opportunity for executing his purpose soon occurred.

The lady one morning, looking from the window, saw her son coming wandering down the hill, and hastened to put a girdle cake upon the fire, that he might have hot bread for breakfast. Something called her out of the apartment after making this preparation, and her husband, entering at the same time, saw at once what she had been about, and determined to give the boy such a reception as should disgust him for the future. He snatched the cake from the girdle, thrust it into his stepson's hands, which he forcibly closed on the scalding

bread, saying, "Here, Allan, here is a cake which your mother has got ready for your breakfast." Allan's hands were severely burnt; and, being a sharp-witted and proud boy, he resented this mark of his step-father's ill-will, and came not again to Torloisk.

At this time the western seas were covered with the vessels of pirates, who, not unlike the sea-kings of Denmark at an early period, sometimes settled and made conquests on the islands. Allan-a-Sop was young, strong, and brave to desperation. He entered as a mariner on board of one of these ships, and in process of time obtained the command, first of one galley, then of a small flotilla, with which he sailed round the seas and collected considerable plunder, until his name became both feared and famous. At length he proposed to himself to pay a visit to his mother, whom he had not seen for many years; and setting sail for this purpose, he anchored one morning in the sound of Ulva, and in front of the house of Torloisk. His mother was dead, but his step-father, to whom he was now as much an object of fear as he had been formerly of aversion, hastened to the shore to receive his formidable stepson, with great affectation of kindness and interest in his prosperity; while Allan-a-Sop, who, though very rough and hasty, does not appear to have been sullen or vindictive, seemed to take his kind reception in good part.

The crafty old man succeeded so well, as he thought, in securing Allan's friendship, and obliterating all recollections of the former affront put on him, that he began to think it possible to employ his stepson in executing his own private revenge upon MacQuarrie of Ulva, with whom, as was usual between such neighbours, he had some feud. With this purpose, he offered what he called the following good advice to his stepson:—"My dear Allan, you have now wandered over the seas long enough: it is time you should have

some footing upon land—a castle to protect yourself in winter, a village and cattle for your men, and a harbour to lay up your galleys. Now, here is the island of Ulva, near at hand, which lies ready for your occupation, and it will cost you no trouble, save that of putting to death the present proprietor, the Laird of MacQuarrie, a useless old carle, who has cumbered the world long enough."

Allan-a-Sop thanked his step-father for so happy a suggestion, which he declared he would put in execution forthwith. Accordingly, setting sail the next morning, he appeared before MacQuarrie's house an hour before noon. The old chief of Ulva was much alarmed at the menacing apparition of so many galleys, and his anxiety was not lessened by the news that they were commanded by the redoubtless Allan-a-Sop. Having no effectual means of resistance, MacQuarrie, who was a man of shrewd sense, saw no alternative save that of receiving the invaders, whatever might be their purpose, with all outward demonstrations of joy and satisfaction; the more especially as he recollects having taken some occasional notice of Allan during his early youth, which he now resolved to make the most of. Accordingly, MacQuarrie caused immediate preparations to be made for a banquet, as splendid as circumstances admitted, hastened down to the shore to meet the rover, and welcomed him to Ulva with such an appearance of sincerity, that the pirate found it impossible to pick any quarrel, which might afford a pretence for executing the violent purpose which he had been led to meditate.

They feasted together the whole day; and, in the evening, as Allan-a-Sop was about to retire to his ships, he thanked the laird for his hospitality, but remarked, with a sigh, that it had cost him very dear.

"How can that be," said Mac-

Quarrie, "when I bestowed this entertainment upon you in free good-will?"

"It is true, my friend," replied the pirate, "but then it has quite disconcerted the purpose for which I came hither; which was to put you to death, my good friend, and seize upon your house and island, and so settle myself in the world. It would have been very convenient for me, this island of Ulva; but your friendly reception has rendered it impossible for me to execute my purpose, so that I must be a wanderer on the seas for some time longer."

Whatever MacQuarrie felt at learning he had been so near to destruction, he took care to show no emotion save surprise, and replied to his visitor: "My dear Allan, who was it that put into your mind so unkind a purpose towards your old friend; for I am sure it never arose from your own generous nature? It must have been old Torloisk, who made such an indifferent husband to your mother, and such an unfriendly step-father to you when you were a helpless boy; but now, when he sees you a bold and powerful leader, he desires to make a quarrel betwixt you and those who were the friends of your youth. If you consider this matter rightly, Allan, you will see that the estate and harbour of Torloisk lie to the full as conveniently for you as those of Ulva, and that, if you are disposed (as is very natural) to make a settlement by force, it is much better it should be at the expense of the old churl, who never showed you kindness or countenance, than at that of a friend like me, who always loved and honoured you."

Allan-a-Sop was struck with the justice of this reasoning; and the old offence of his scalded fingers was suddenly recalled to his mind. "It is very true what you say, MacQuarrie," he replied, "and, besides, I have not forgotten what a hot breakfast my step-father treated me to one morning.

Farewell for the present ; you shall soon hear news of me from the other side of the Sound." Having said thus much, the pirate got on board, and commanding his men to unmoor the galleys, sailed back to Torloisk, and prepared to land in arms. MacLean hastened to meet him, in expectation to hear of the death of his enemy, MacQuarrie. But Allan greeted him in a very different manner from what he expected.

" You hoary old traitor," he said,

" you instigated my simple good-nature to murder a better man than yourself ! But have you forgotten how you scorched my fingers twenty years ago with a burning cake ? The day is come that that breakfast must be paid for."

So saying, he dashed out the old man's brains with a battle-axe, took possession of his castle and property, and established there a distinguished branch of the clan of MacLean.—*From Tales of a Grandfather.*

JOHN HETHERINGTON'S DREAM.

IN a certain small town in the south of Scotland, there lived, about three years ago, a very respectable tailor, of the name of John Hetherington—that is to say, John wore well with the world ; but, like too many of his craft, he was sorely addicted to cabbaging. Not a coat could he make, not a pair of trousers could he cut out, not a waistcoat could he stitch up, but he must have a patch of this, that, and t'other, were it for no other purpose but just to serve as a bit of a memorial. One very warm evening towards the end of August 1826, John had gone to bed rather earlier than usual, but not without having laid in a very good share of a very tasty Welsh rabbit ; which said rabbit, being composed of about a pound of tough cheese, of course furnished the poor tailor, after he had fairly tumbled over into the land of Nod, with something of a very curious Welsh-rabbit vision. It suddenly struck him that this life, with all its cares and anxieties, was over with him ; that the finishing stitch had been put to the great work of life, and the thread of his existence cut through. In the other world, to his misfortune,

he found things not moving so comfortably as he would have wished ; and the old gentleman with the short horns and the long tail, rigged out in his best suit of black, was the first friend he gathered with after passing the border.

" There's a fine morning," said the wily old dog ; " how do you find yourself after long travel ? "

" No that weel," stammered out the half-dead son of a goose ; " no that weel ; and I dinna think, all things considered, it would benefit me much to be found in such company, no offence to your reverence," as he saw his new friend's choler rise ; " no offence to your reverence, I trust ; but if I may be so bold, I would thank you to tell me the reason of my being here ; and, above all, who's to be thankit for the honour of an introduction to your reverence ? "

" That you will know shortly, friend ; nay, John Hetherington, for you see I know you ; " and taking a large parcel from below his left arm, he commenced to unroll it, and to the astonishment of poor John, unfolded a long sheet of patchwork, in which were found scraps of every hue, a web of many colours, all neatly stitched together ; and in the

middle, by way of a set off, a large bit of most excellent blue cloth, which had been cabbaged that very morning from a prime piece which he had got into his hands for the purpose of making a marriage coat for his neighbour the blacksmith.

"Was all this stuff got fairly and honestly, good man?" said the old gentleman, with a sneer quite worthy of Beelzebub. "I suppose you will be able to recognise some of these old bits. What think you now of that piece in the middle which your eyes are fixed on—cabbaged no farther back than this morning? Come along, my old boy, come along; you are a true son of your old father, I see, and I will furnish you with as warm winter quarters as you ever enjoyed when you was half-stewed with your old maiden aunt, at the top of fifteen pair of stairs in the High Street of Edinburgh, when serving your apprenticeship with Dick Mouley-pouches."

A cold sweat broke over the poortailor, and he felt as if he could have sunk snugly into the earth, if it had only had the goodness to open at that moment for his especial accommodation, when he saw the long bony arm stretched out, with its sharp eagle claws, to clutch him: he made a sharp bolt back, and giving vent to his feelings in a loud and long howl, which rung horribly in his ears long after opening his eyes, he found himself sprawling in the middle of his wooden floor, with all the bedclothes tumbled above him. It was the first breaking out of a fine morning: the sun was rising, and all nature looked fresh and fair; but poor John was at the point of death with sheer bodily fear and trembling, so that to get to bed again, and to sleep, would have been martyrdom; therefore he huddled on his clothes, and walked out "to snuff the caller air," and muse over his wonderful dream. The more he thought of it, the more he saw the

necessity of reforming his mode of life; and, before finishing his stroll, he was an altered man, and had made up his mind never more to cabbage an inch of cloth; and, by walking circumspect and just, he trusted that his past offences might be wiped out, and that the wonderful web of many colours should no more be brought up as evidence against him. To make him the more secure in the event of forgetfulness in the hour of temptation, his foreman was let into the great secret, and had orders at all times to rub up his remembrance when there was any thing good going, which he used to do by the laconic phrase of, "Master, mind the sheet!"

A year passed over, and the terror of the dream being yet fresh in his memory, John's transactions were strictly honest. He could cut out with somewhat more considerable ease, and had lost a good deal the knack of cutting out the sly piece at the corner. But, alas! for the stability of all human resolutions, our friend was sorely tempted, and how he stood we shall soon see. He had got to hand a beautiful piece of red cloth, for what purpose I know not, whether for the coat of a field officer, or the back of a fox hunter, but a prime piece of cloth that was; he turned it over to this side, and back to that, viewed it in all lights and shades, rubbed it against the grain, and found it faultless. He had never seen such a fine piece of cloth before—scissors had never before cut such immaculate stuff. He fixed his eye wistfully on a tempting corner, looked up, and his foreman John was staring firmly in his face: he had read his thoughts.

"Master, mind the sheet!" solemnly ejaculated John.

"I'm just swithering, John; I'm just swithering: now when I mind, there wasna a piece of red cloth in all the sheet; and mair by token, there was a bit gap at one of the corners. Now, I'm

just thinking, since it maun be that all these bit odds and ends are to be evidence against me when I come to the lang count, it would be better to snick

a bit aff the corner here; and that you see, John, will fill all deficiencies, and mak the sheet, since it maun appear against me, evidence, John, without a flaw!"

BLACK JOE O' THE BOW.

BY JAMES SMITH.

IN the days no sae very lang syne, when the auld West Bow o' Edinburgh was in the deadthraw o' its glory, there lived an auld blackymore named Joe Johnson. He was weel kent through a' the toun for his great ingenuity in makin' ships an' automaton figures—something like the "Punch and Judy" o' present times, but mair exquisitely finished an'—what d'ye ca' that fine word?—*artistic?*—that's it. Aweel, this man, commonly ca'd Black Joe, lived up a lang stair in the Bow, on the richt-hand side gaun doun. He made his livin' in simmer by the bonnie bits o' ships he made, displaying them for sale at the front gate o' Heriot's Wark, in Lauriston; an' whiles he took a change at the drum an' pan-pipes, wi' a wee doggie ca'd Pincher, that stood on its hint-legs when Joe was playin', wi' a tin saucer in its mouth to haud the coppers. Sometimes, when Joe was playin', and naething was comin' in, the dog wad bite somebody's leg by mistake to vary the entertainment, to Joe's unspeakable delight. But this was often followed by somebody roaring oot—"Horselip! Horselip!" an' then the drumstick flew through the crowd at somebody's head, an' Joe was generally marched to the office between twa policemen. But for a' his fiery temper when roused, he had a kind, canny way wi' him when civilly treated, an' wadna hae wrangled a livin' cratur.

When the lang winter nichts set in, Joe had a show at the fit o' his stair;

an' after the Bow rang wi' his drum an' pan-pipes, as he stood at the outside o' the show, wi' a lichtit paper lantern stuck up in front, whereon was painted a rough sketch o' Billy Button on the road to Brentford, the Babes in the Wood, Tam o' Shanter on his mare Meg, pursued by the witches, wi' Cutty Sark makin' a catch at Maggie's tail, or some ither scenic representation. Whiles, when Joe was burstin' his black face in the middle o' a fine tune, some ragged imp wad roar—

Hey cocky dawdy, hey cocky dow—
Horselip, Horselip's comin doun the Bow,

Wi' his drum an' his pipe, an' his pipe,
pipe, pipe!

Doun went the drum, an' aff ran Joe after the malicious urchin, the doggie first and foremost in the chase. For whether the beast had been trained, or acted through the force o' instinct, certain it is, that nae sooner was its maister ca'd "Horselip," than aff it sprang, an' fixed its teeth in the shins o' the first ane that cam in its way.

There was ae New Year's nicht that an unco mess took place wi' Joe's show. There was a wee funny dancin' figure o' a man that the laddies aye ca'd "Tooral"—ane o' the best figures in the show. This figure was on the stage singin' "Tooraladdy," an' he was at the last verse—

Tak the pan an' break his head—
Tooraladdy, tooraladdy;

That's a' as fac' as death—

when a wild loon, that had been lookin'

on wi' a greedy e'e an' a watery mouth at the figures a' nicht, unable ony langer to resist temptation, made a dart at "Tooral," and vanished wi' him oot o' the show. This created an unco commotion, for when the folk begoud to rise up in the gallery—it was a' gallery thegither—as Joe rushed out after the thief, cryin' "Polish! polish! polish!—catch a thief! catch a thief!" the whole rickety concern cam doun wi' a great crash. But they didna fa' far; for it wasna muckle mair than five or six inches frae the ground a'thegither. But the thief was never gotten that nicht, tho' it's a consolation to ken that he was banished shortly afterwards for stealin' a broon tammy an' a quarter o' saut butter frae a puir widdy woman, as she was comin' out o' a provision shop in the Canongate.

But Joe was thrown into sic a state wi' rinnin' through the toun after the thief, that next day he was delirious wi' a ragin' fever. My mither lived but an' ben wi' Joe; an' it was while gaun in noo an' then to see how the puir body was doing, that a strange interest in Joe's history was awakened in her breast. For he had cam oot wi' some very strange expressions when lyin' in the delirious state. Once or twice he cried, "Me nebber shoot massa—me nebber shoot massa. Major murder him broder—me see 'im do it. Got pistol yet—me tell truth—me no tell lie;" an' sae he wad gang ravin' on at this gait for hours. When at last the fever had abated, an' Joe was able to come ben an' sit doun by my mither's fireside, she asked him, in her ain canny way, if he wadna like to gang back again to his native country. But the black fell a tremblin', an' shook his head, sayin' "Nebber—nebber—nebber more!" This roused my mither's curiosity to the highest pitch, for she was convinced noo, mair than ever, that some dark history was locked up in the African's breast. Ae day, a

while after this, Joe cam ben an' sat doun by the fireside, as usual; for though the day was scorching hot, being in the heat o' summer, the cratur was aye shiverin' and cowerin' wi' the cauld. Takin oot his cutty pipe, as usual, he began to fill't, sayin'—"Missy, me no lib long; me no strength—me weak as water—me no happy—wish 'im was dead."

"What way that?" asked my mither; "by my faith, ye'll live mony a lang day yet. Deedin'! deil the fear o' ye!"

But Joe aye shook his head.

"Joe," says my mither, takin' his puir wasted hand in her ain, "there's something mair than weakness the matter wi' ye. I ken that, whatever ye may say; and the best thing for ye to do's to mak a clean breast o't. Whatever ye may say to me, I promise shall be as secret as the grave. Ye ken me ower weel to doot that."

Joe lookit earnestly in her face, an' syne at the door. My mither cannily closed the door, an' sat doun beside him. Then the nigger, cautioning her to mind her promise, telt her a story that sent her to her bed that nicht wi' a gey quaking heart. But as this story wadna be richtly understood to gie't in the nigger's strange broken English, I'll tell't in my ain way.

Ten years before Joe cam to Edinburgh, baith him an' his wife were slaves on Zedekiah Gilroy's plantation in Jamaica. This Zedekiah Gilroy was the second son o' Colonel Gilroy, o' Hawkesneb Hoose. I mind o' the place mysel' as weel as if it were yesterday; for mony a time I've passed it on the road to my aunty's at Cockleburgh. It's a gude fourteen hours' journey frae Edinburgh—try't ony day ye like. Aweel, the eldest son o' this Colonel Gilroy had gotten a commission in the East India Company, an' had risen to the rank o' major in ane o' the native regiments; but brocht himself' into disgrace there by causing the death o'

ane o' his servants wi' his merciless cruelty, an' was obliged to sell oot, an' come hame in disgrace. He hadna been lang hame, when a letter cam frae his brither, requesting him to come oot an' look after his estate, for he had been twice attacked by yellow fever, an' was utterly incompetent to look after't. His overseers, he said, were rivin' him oot o' hoose an' ha', an' a' thing was gaun wrang thegither. His wife had been struck doun by the same fell disease, an' a lowness o' spirits had ta'en possession o' him, that a' the luxuries o' high life an' plenty o' siller couldna diminish. His only wish was to see his brither oot beside him, an' tak for a while the oversicht o' his affairs, till health an' strength blessed him ance mair. Aweel, under a' thae circumstances, the auld colonel advised his son to gang oot an' do his best to help his brither in his sair extremity. Sae the major, wi' an unco show o' reluctance, at last consented, an' aff he gaed to Jamaica, to play the deevil there, as he had done before in the East Indies.

Major Gilroy wasna lang at Jamaica when an unco change for the waur took place. There was naething but orderin', cursin', swearin', an' lashin' o' slaves frae mornin' till nicht. Joe's wife was amang the first that succumbed to the murderous whip, an' Joe himsel' cam in for mair than his share. Rumours soon began to spread that the maister himsel' was tyrannised ower by his brither. He was ane o' the very kindest o' maisters to his slaves, until his brither cam like a frosty blicht, and filled the whole estate wi' lamentation. Sae this state o' things gaed on for nearly six months, when ae day Joe, exasperated at the inhuman treatment he was receivin' at the major's instigation, took leg-bail to the sea-shore, an' hid himsel' amang the cliffs. There he lurked, day after day, crawlin' oot at nicht to gather shell-fish an' dulse frae the rocks, an' castin' his e'e ower the wide watery waste for the

welcome sight o' a sail to bear him frae the accursed spot. Mair than ance he had heard the shouts o' the manhunters on his track, intermingling wi' the terrible bay o' the bluidhound. But a' their vigilance was eluded by the impregnable nature o' his position, high up amang the rocks.

On the morning o' the thirteenth day after his escape, he cautiously emerged frae his high den, an' looked around him as usual. The air was intensely hot, an' dark-red masses o' cloud were fast drivin' through a black, lowering sky, the certain presage o' a fearfu' storm. The sea lay calm and still, for there wasna a breath o' wind stirring, an' flocks o' sea-birds were filling the sultry air wi' their harsh, discordant cries. Suddenly a flash o' forked lichtnin' illuminated the black, murky sky, an' a loud clap o' thunder reverberated amang the mountains. Then the lichtnin' an' thunder became incessant, the sea lashed itsel' into foam an' fury, an' the rain poured doun in torrents. As the slave surveyed the elements thus rugin' in a' their terrific grandeur, the distant sound o' carriage-wheels caught his ear. Nearer an' nearer they cam, till he recognised a gig driven by the major comin' on at a rattlin' pace. His brither sat beside him, propped up wi' shawls and cushions, an' appeared to be at that moment in an attitude o' earnest entreaty; while every noo and then the faint sound o' voices in noisy altercation was borne on the gale that noo roared ower land an' sea, though what they said it was utterly impossible to distinguish. The slave looked on, first in astonishment, an' syne in horror; for instead o' turnin' the horse's head hame-wards as the storm cam on, the major persisted in drivin' richt on through the sands as the spring-tide was fast comin' in, in spite o' the agonised entreaties o' his brither to turn. At last the gig was stopped, as the horse, plunging and restive, went up to the middle in water.

Then a deadly struggle took place that lasted scarcely a minute, when the report o' a pistol reverberated amid the thunder, an' the next instant the body o' the invalid was hurled into the roaring surge. Then, indeed, the horse's head was turned hameward, an' aff went the gig in richt earnest, but no before a wild yell o' execration frae the cliff warned the murderer that the deed had been witnessed by mair than the e'e o' God abune. Scarcely had the sound o' the wheels died away, when the slave descended the lofty precipitous rocks wi' the agility o' a wild cat, an' plunged into the sea to save, if it were yet possible, his puir maister. But the dark purple streaks on the surface o' the water where the deed was accomplished telt, ower fearfully, that the sharks were already thrang at their horrid wark, an' that a' hope o' saving him, if he werena clean deid after the pistol-shot was fired, was for ever gane. Therefore he reluctantly swam back to the shore, wi' barely enough o' time to save himsel'. Before scaling the cliff, he lifted the pistol that the murderer, in the hurry an' confusion o' the moment, had left behind him on the beach. This incident filled the slave wi' fresh alarm, for it was certain the major wad come back for't before lang. Sae a' that nicht he wearied sair for the mornin' to come in. Slowly at last the storm subsided, as the first pale streaks o' dawn were visible in the horizon; an' as the daylight lengthened mair an' mair, he saw a dark speck floating on the waves, that on a nearer approach proved to be a boat that had burst frae its moorings frae some ship in the distant harbour. Fervently thanking God for this providential means o' deliverance, he descended frae his freindly shelter for the last time, an' boldly struck out for the boat, which he reached in safety. Seizing the oars, he steered oot to the open sea, wi' a fervent prayer that the dark drizzy fog that enveloped the ocean wad continue to

shield him, for a time, frae his merciless enemy, till some friendly ship wad tak him up. It was high time; for he hadna gi'en half-a-dozen strokes, when the sound o' angry voices, among which was the major's, was borne on the breeze, an' again the deep-toned bay o' the bluidhound nerved his arms wi' a' the energy o' desperation. Farther an' farther oot he gaed, battling wi' the heavily swelling rollers that threatened every moment to engulf the boat he steered sae bravely. For mony a lang and weary hour he struggled wi' the giant waves, enveloped in fog, till the darkness o' nicht had nearly set in; an' he was fast gi'en up a' hopes o' succour, when the tout o' a horn near at hand warned him that a ship was bearing doun upon him. He had barely time to steer oot o' her way, when he was hailed by the captain, an' asked where he cam frae. Joe made answer that he was the sole survivor o' the *Nancy*, bound for England, that had sprung a leak, an' foundered in last nicht's gale. At that moment a terrible wave capsized the boat, and Joe was struggling in the water. But a rope was flung oot to him, an' he speedily drew himsel' on board. This circumstance o' the boat's being swamped was a mercy for Joe; for had the name o' the ship she belanged to met the captain's e'e, the lee wad hae been fand oot, an' it micht hae fared waur wi' him. But the captain treated Joe wi' great kindness, and telt him he micht work his passage to Leith, which was the port o' their destination. The vessel was a Leith trader named the *William and Mary*, an' was on her passage hame frae the Island o' Cuba.

Here, let it be remembered, Joe wasna to be blamed a' thegither for the doonricht lee he telt the captain. He was a runaway slave in the first place, an' had the captain kent the truth, it's mair than likely he wad hae delivered him up at the first port he touched at on the voyage hame. In the second place,

there was nae ither witness o' the fearfu' crime binna himsel'; an' he had the tact to see that evidence resting on the sole testimony o' a rinaway slave, mair especially when that slave might be reasonably suspected o' vindictive feelings against the murderer, wad be treated wi' scorn an' indignation, an' even add to the horrors o' his ain death. Therefore Joe kept his ain coonsel, and when the vessel arrived at Leith, he wandered up to Edinburgh, and resided for mony a lang year in the West Bow, makin' his livin' in the manner already related, and wi' the secret carefully locked up in his breast until now.

"Aweel, Joe," said my mither, when she had heard him oot, "that's an unco story, man. But are ye aware that the auld colonel's aye livin' yet, an' that it wad be a duty to let him ken the truth?" Hère Joe lookit in her face sae pitifu' an' imploring like, that she didna find it in her heart to press the question ony mair at that time. But when the body gaed awa' ben, my mither sat thinkin' and thinkin' till the day was far spent; an' for mony a lang day after that she hadna muckle peace o' mind.

Ae mornin' she put on her bannit and shawl, and said she wadna be hame till late. Although I was a bit lassie at the time, I jaloused where she was gaun, but I never let on. It wasna till late, late at nicht that she cam hame, an' then she telt me she had been at Hawkesneb' Hoose on a pretence to see if an auld servant she had kent mony a year sin' was aye bidin' there. As she rang the gate-bell, she said a fearfu' sense o' shame an' disgrace comin' ower an auld man made her swither; but there was the lodge-keeper's wife comin' to the gate, an' it was ower late noo to gang back. She then inquired for ane Jess Tamson, that had been a servant up at the big hoose three years sin'; but the woman said she didna ken o' onyboddy o' that name servin' there noo. My mither

said that was an unco pity, as she had cam a lang way to see her, an' her feet were sair blistered wi' the roads. The woman then opened the gate, an' asked my mither into the lodge, an' offered her a cup o' tea, for which my mither was very thankfu'. Then, when the twa fell on the crack, my mither said the laird wad be gey far doon the brae noo, for he was an auld man in Jess's time. My mither came oot wi' this in her ain pawky way, to hear for certain whether the colonel were dead or livin'.

"The auld colonel's dead an' gane a year sin'," said the woman, "but his son the major's expected hame in a month; an' I'm sure there has been sic a scrubbin' an' cleanin' an' hammerin', that what wi' masons, joiners, plasterers, painters, and glaziers, there hasna been muckle rest for the servants this last fortnicht."

"An' is the major married?" asked my mither.

"Married! no as yet," said the woman. "They say he's turned unco silent and cantankerous since his brither's death, sees naebody, an' never gangs to sleep without wax candles burnin' a' nicht by his bedside."

"The major never gangs to sleep without wax candles burnin' a' nicht by his bedside!" said my mither, slowly comin' ower the words after her. "Deary me, that's strange!" tryin' sair to keep in her breath. "What kind o' death was't his brither dee'd o', hae ye heard?"

"What kind o' death was't? It was murder, dounricht murder!" said the woman; "an' done too by ane o' his ain slaves through revenge. But it was a grand day for the major when his brither dee'd; for he wasna a month gane when the plantation was selt aff, an' the major left Jamaica wi' mony a braw thousand pound in his pouch."

My mither then asked if the major cam hame at that time. The woman said, "No, he had gane to Italy, and

aye kept sendin' letters to his faither every noo and then, makin' apologies about his health being in a delicate state, and declaring his resolution to abide by the advice o' his doctors to remain in a warmer climate, in spite o' the auld laird's anxious entreaties for him to come hame. I often used to wonder at the major's continued absence; an' it lookit strange that he didna come to lay his faither's head in the grave, though he's comin' hame noo. As for the slave that did the deed, they raised a hue an' cry after him for a while; but the murderer was never gotten, an' it's not likely he ever will be noo. It seems the major had been gi'en his brither an airing in a gig, when they were attacked by the slave frae behind, wha fired a pistol at his brither oot o' revenge, and then fled, wounding him mortally. The major pursued, but when he had gane a lang distance and fand he couldna mak up to him, he cam back to the spot where the murder had been committed, expecting to see the body; but, astonishing to relate, the body had disappeared. And the man that did the deed, as I said before, was never gotten; nor is it very likely he ever will be, after sic a lang lapse o' time. It seems he fled awa to the mountains among the Maroons, as they ca' them."

"That's hard, hard to say," said my mither; "but God has his ain ways o' workin', lass, an' maybe the deed'll be brocht to licht in a way that you an' me little dream o'." Then she rose up, an' spoke o' gaun hame; but the woman wadna hear o't, sayin' the nicht was ower far gane, an' she wad mak her very welcome to a bed beside the bairns. At that moment the gudeman himsel' cam in, an' seeing her anxiety to gang awa, he said the mail-coach wad be gaun by in half an hour, an' he had nae doot the guard wad gie her a lift into the toun. Sae she waited till the coach cam by, an' fortunately got a ride in.

Aweel, when my mither had composed hersel' a bit, after she had telt this, she filled her cutty-pipe, an' begoud to blaw. "Lassie," says she to me, after a wee, "fetch doun yer faither's Bible frae the shelf." It aye got the name o' my faither's Bible, though he had been deid an' gane mony a year. Sae I gied her the Bible; an' then I heard her slowly readin' ower thae verses frae the Book o' Proverbs—"Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked when it cometh; for the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken." This she read ower twa-three times to hersel', an' syne put a mark at the place, and gaed awa to her bed. And lang after that, as the puir body lay half doverin', I heard her comin' ower and ower thae bonnie verses, till she was fast asleep. The first thing she did, when the mornin' cam in, was to tell Joe o' her journey an' its result. The puir African lifted up his hands in astonishment when she telt him the murder had been laid to his charge. But she took doun the Bible again, an' read ower the verses that had sae powerfully arrested her attention the nicht before; and as she read them, a gleam o' triumphant exultation shone in the e'e o' the puir nigger—a look o' conscious innocence, that dispelled every vestige o' doot in my mither's mind, if she ever had ony, an' made her sympathise a' the mair wi' the lingerin' agony he had endured since the murder was committed. He noo declared his readiness to lodge an accusation against Major Gilroy; for the fear o' his word being misdooted vanished as if by magic frae his mind, mair especially when my mither led him to understand that, being in a free country, nae slave-owner could touch him, and that his word would be ta'en wi' the best white man among them a'. Hooever, my mither advised him no to be rash, but to bide a wee till the major's arrival, as an accusation pre-

ferred against him in his absence might be construed into an evidence o' guilt on the part o' the accuser ; for the wily, lang-headit bodies o' lawyers were fit for onything, an' siller could do an awfu' lot, an' mak black look white ony day. Besides, Great Britain was at this time deeply engaged in the Slave Trade, and micht be ower glad to tak the major's part. Sae Joe took her advice, an' prayed that Job wad teach him patience.

Three weeks had passed away, when Joe, unable ony langer to control the wild tumult that reigned in his breast, gaed awa oot to Hawkesneb Hoose, carryin' his drum an' pan-pipes wi' him as usual. It had been a drizziy sma' rain a' day ; an' when he reached his journey's end, as nicht set in, he was wet through an' through. The place was a' in darkness, and as he stood at the gate, an' looked up the lang dusky avenue, he half resolved to gang back, an' trust to time an' the retributive justice o' Heaven to prove his innocence. But an impulse he couldna resist chained him to the spot, an' he rang the gate-bell. Nae answer was returned ; a second time he rang, but still wi' the same result. Then he pushed the gate forward, and to his surprise it swung heavily back on its hinges. Wi' an unsteady, tremblin' step, he advanced up the dark avenue till he reached the mansion. The hoose seemed silent an' deserted, binna a sma' licht that twinkled in ane o' the lower windows, an' as he drew nearer, the sound o' voices reached his ear. Then the resolve to gang back again took possession o' him ; but the strange impulse to advance gained the mastery, an' he lifted the kitchen knocker. A lass wasna lang in makin' her appearance at the door wi' a lichtit candle in her hand ; an' nae sooner did she see the black man stannin' oot in the dark than she gied a roar as if Joe had been the very deevil himsel'. This brocht ben a' the rest o' the servants ;

an' a bonnie hurly-burly was set up as this ane an' the ither ane wondered hoo he had got in.

" That's your negligence, Willie Johnston," said an auld leddy dressed in black, that appeared to be the hoose-keeper ; " I'm sure ye needna hae been sae thochtless as that, particularly at a time when the major's lookit for every minute."

This was addressed to the keeper o' the lodge, that had come up to the big hoose wi' his wife at the hoosekeeper's invitation, to while awa the nicht wi' a cup o' tea an' a dram. Willie Johnston fell a swearin', an' was aboot to lay violent hands on Joe, when the butler, a wee fat birsy body, but no bad-hearted, ordered him to desist ; and seeing the nicht was sae cauld an' wat, he brocht Joe into the kitchen, and thinkin' him a cadger, he set down baith bread, meat, an' beer before him, tellin' him to look alive, for it wadna do to stay lang there. The hoosekeeper didna offer ony objection to this, as mony aane wad hae dune ; but to tell the truth, it seems that the twa were unco gracious, for when the tane took whisky, the tither took yill-sae that settles that. When Joe had sat for a while preein' the mercies set before him, ane o' them—the laundry-maid—gi'en a wistfu' look at Joe's drum an' pan-pipes, said she hadna haen a dance since gude kens the time, an' the cook, an' the kitchen-maid, an' a young crater o' a funkey, expressed themsel's in a similar manner.

" A dance !" cried the hoosekeeper, makin' a pretence o' being angry. " A bonnie daft-like thing it wad be to welcome hame the laird wi' a drum an' pan-pipes, as if he were the keeper o' a wild-beast show. A fiddle michtna be sae bad."

Joe saw what was wanted. It was only a quiet invitation to play for naething ; sae he took a lang heavy pull at the beer-jug, an' syne struck up a lilt that set them a' up on their feet the-

gither. An' sae on he played, tune after tune, until a breathin' time was ca'ed ; an' the whisky an' beer in plenty were again gaun round, when the gate-bell was rung wi' great violence.

"Flee for yer life to the gate, Willie Johnston," cried the hoosekeeper, "an' stop that skirlin'. I'm sure I never expected him the nicht noo, when it's sae late. What's to be dune? Haste ye, Sally, to the major's room, an' on wi' a fire like winkin'!" and in an instant a' was confusion, an' every ane stannin' in each ither's road.

The soond o' carriage wheels was heard comin' up the avenue, and the lood gruff voice o' Major Gilroy cursing the carelessness o' the lodge-keeper startled every ane there, but nane mair sae than Joe ; for that voice brocht back the past in a' its terrible reality, an' he kent the crisis was comin' wi' a crash either for him or his auld relentless oppressor. But him and his pan-pipes were then as completely forgotten by the servants as if they had never been there. But as quietness was at last restored, an' the major had shut himself up in his room, wi' a stern injunction to the butler that he wasna to be disturbed wi' supper or onything else that nicht, an' threatenin' instant dismissal to the first that gied him ony cause o' annoyance, Joe asked the hoosekeeper, wi' a palpitatin' heart, if he micht gang noo.

"No, for a thoosand pound I wadna open that door," said the hoosekeeper ; "ye had better bide awhile yet till he's asleep. I never saw sic a savage-lookin' man in my life, as he cam in at the front door. He's completely changed since I mind o' him, when he wasna muckle mair than a laddie. An' sic a restless, suspicious e'e as he's got ! I dinna like it—I positively dinna like it. But I'll never pit up wi' sic a man—I'll tak to drink, as sure's I'm a livin' woman. An' what the deil brocht you here?—makin' things fifty times

waur ! Ye'll never get oot o' here this nicht—I'm certain o' that. An' yet there's that brute," pointing to Pincher, that a' this time had been keepin' quiet under the table, thrang worryin' at a big bane—"what's to be dune if it barks?"

But Joe gied her to understand there was nae fear o' that, for he had him ower weel trained to mak ony disturbance ; but oh! he was anxious—anxious to be off. The woman, hooever, remained inexorable. There was therefore nae help for't but to sit doun on a chair by the kitchen fireside, an' be slippit oot cannily in the mornin' before the major was up. Sae they a' gaed awa to their beds, an' Joe was left alone in the kitchen, wi' Pincher snockerin' at his side. But Joe couldna close an e'e, wi' the intensity o' his thocht ; for here, at last, had the providence o' God brocht the murderer and his accuser beneath the same roof. Joe lay doverin' an' waitin' wearily for the mornin' comin' in. The weather had cleared up, an' the moon was streamin' in through the kitchen windows. The fire had gane oot, an' the air felt cauld an' chill ; an' gradually a feeling o' horror took possession o' Joe that he couldna shake off. At last Pincher gaed a low growl, as if he had heard somebody comin'. Joe could hear nae-thing at first, but by degrees he became sensible that a step was advancin', saft, an' almost noiseless, doun the kitchen stair ; an' slowly the door opened as a figure dressed in a lang dressin'-goun, an' a lichtit wax candle in its hand, entered the kitchen. Speechless and unable to move, Joe saw his mortal enemy, the major, starin' him in the face ; but as he silently returned the gaze, he became sensible that it was void o' consciousness. The major was walkin' in his sleep, that was evident, for he kept movin' up an' doun the kitchen, mutterin' to himself'. He laid doun the candle on the floor in ane o'

his rounds, an' said in a tone sae distinct that Joe could hear every word—

" Will the sea give up its dead?—No, no. Why does his face always turn up amid the roaring waves, as if to taunt me with the crime, and drag me to eternal perdition? Pshaw! it's but a fancy after all. But the slave who eluded my vengeance—curses on him!—where is *he*? Wandering over the face of the earth, to confront me at last, perhaps, and accuse me as my brother's murderer. But will they believe *him*? They will not—nay, they dare not—they dare not. Yet oh! the black countenance of that infernal fiend dogs me wherever I go, and will not give me peace—peace—peace!"

Then he took up the candle an' made for the door, drew back, an' again cam into the kitchen; then left the kitchen a second time, an' opened the door. The sudden rush o' the nicht air put oot the candle, an' he again entered the kitchen. At that moment he stumbled ower a chair, an' Pincher gaed a loud bark, as the major started to his feet, restored to consciousness. And as the moon's rays revealed every surrounding object wi' a ghastly distinctness, the first sicht that met his e'e was Joe—Joe stannin' before him, rigid and motionless—an auld rusty pistol in his richt hand presented at him, an' a wild glare o' rage an' defiance flashin' in his unearthly-lookin' e'en. The suddenness o' the appearance o' this apparition—for apparition he thocht Joe to be—completely paralysed him for the moment. His knees gaed knock, knockin' thegither, as Joe cried—

" Murderer! murderer! murderer! Me tell truth—me no tell lie. You dam rascal—you villain—me hear to speak truth, and truth me speak spite of eberyting. Ha! what you say now?"

As Joe said this, he advanced nearer an' nearer, till the pistol touched the major's breast. But there he stood, powerless to resist; for his belief still

was that Joe was a phantom, till the growlin' o' the doggie brocht him to himself' mair than onything else; and, fired by the energy o' desperation, he made a snatch at the pistol. But the nigger was ower quick for him; for he sprang past the major, and oot at the kitchen door that the major had providentially opened in his sleep, darted doun the avenue and oot at the gate, syne awa at full speed on his lang journey hame, which he reached by nine o'clock in the mornin', mair deid than alive. He cam into my mither's just as she sat doun to her tea, an' gaed her the history o' his last nicht's adventure, as already related. My mither's advice to him was to gang directly to the authorities, an' lodge an accusation. Joe did sae, and the result was that Captain S——, accompanied by half a dozen constables, immediately took the coach for Hawkesneb Hoose, which they reached about seven o'clock.

When they arrived there, the butler, hoosekeeper, an' a' the lave o' them cam out, wonderin' at seein' the police authorities, accompanied by the black man. But when Captain S—— asked, in a stern manner, if he could see the major, an' telling the men to watch the hoose, baith back and front, their surprise was turned into cousternation. The major wasna up yet, the butler said; and his orders the nicht before were that naebody was to disturb him unless his bell rang. And it was neither his business nor onybody else's to intrude where they werena wanted. On hearing this, the captain peremptorily demanded to see his maister, otherwise it wad be necessary to force an entrance into his room. At this the hoosekeeper and butler baith gaed up, an' cried the major's name; but nae answer cam. Then they tried to open the door, but the door was evidently locked frae the inside, for it wadna open. When the captain heard this, he gaed up himsel', an' burst open the door. On entering the room, he lookit round, but could

see naething. The bed lay untouched; there had been naebody there, that was evident. But there was a sma' dressing-room that opened frae the bedroom, and on lookin' there he saw the major lyin' in a doubled-up position on the carpet, wi' his hands clenched, an' his e'en starin' wide open. An empty phial lay beside him, that telt, ower surely, what he had been after. The captain placed his hand on his face, but it was quite cauld; an' there wasna the least doot that he had been dead for a lang time. When the captain cam doune and communicated the news, there was sair wonder an' astonishment, but no muckle grief, 'od knows. The major had been a perfect stranger to them a', except the auld hoosekeeper; an' to do the body justice, she shed a tear or twa; but it's my belief a third never made its appearance, for a' she tried.

Naething farther could be done in the matter. The major had anticipated the demands o' justice by takin' justice on himsel', an' the wuddy had been cheated o' a victim, an' a multitude o' morbid sightseers rightly ungratified. But oh, the joy o' Joe's heart when he cam into my mither's next mornin'! for it seems they had remained in the hoose a' that nicht, till the coach cam by on the Edinburgh journey. The fear that had hung ower him like a nightmare was dispelled for ever, an' his innocence triumphantly established beyond the least shadow o' a doot. Kindly my

mither shook him by the hand, as she said—"The hand o' God's been in't, Joe, my man; an' praise be to his name for sendin' a bonnie glint o' sunshine oot o' the lang dreary darkness that's encompassed ye. An' never forget the verses that gaed ye sic blessed consolation;" an' saftly an' solemnly she cam ower them again—"Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked when it cometh; for the Lord shall be thy confidence, an' shall keep thy foot from being taken." An' Joe looked happy an' contented, an' never forgot my mither's kindness.

Joe gaed aboot the streets o' Edinburgh mony a lang day after this. He never taen up the show again, that I mind o'; but mony a bonnily riggit ship he selt at Heriot's Wark, and on the Earthen Mound, amang the panoramas and the wild-beast shows, and doune at the stairs at bonnie auld Shakespeare Square, that's noo awa; an' mony a time hae I heard his drum an' pan-pipes when I was baith a young quean an' a married wife. He dee'd a short time before the richt-hand side o' the West Bow was taen doun, an' there's no a single vestige noo to be seen o' the auld land where the show used to be, wi' the lichtit paper-lantern at the door, an' the pan-pipes playin' "Tooraladdy," that cheered sae mony young hearts in the days that are noo past an' gane.—*From "Peggy Pinkerton's Recollections."*

THE FIGHT FOR THE STANDARD.

BY JAMES PATERSON.

LIEUTENANT CHARLES EWART, better known as "Sergeant Ewart of the Greys," was born in Kilmarnock about the year 1767, and enlisted in that regiment in 1789. He served under the

Duke of York in the Low Country Campaigns of 1793-4, and shared in all the victories and defeats which the allied arms experienced. The disasters encountered by the British arose in a

great measure from the duplicity of the Dutch, as well as from the military incapacity of the Royal general. At the battle, if we mistake not, of Fleurus, in the Netherlands, where the Republican forces, after a protracted contest, were the victors, Ewart had the misfortune to be taken prisoner. Towards the close of the action, the Greys were so thoroughly surrounded by the enemy that escape was considered next to impossible. As the only means of preventing their entire capture, they were ordered to disperse in small parties of twos and threes, each to exert himself as he best might in finding his way to the allied army, which had undertaken a retrograde movement. It was evening as Ewart and his companions endeavoured to thread their way amidst the smoke and spreading darkness by which they were enveloped. They had not proceeded far, when, perceiving a body of French cavalry at a short distance, they were compelled to seek safety in an opposite direction. Though hotly pursued, they put spurs to their horses, and soon distanced their enemies. At length they found themselves in the vicinity of a wood, and, ignorant of the direction in which they were proceeding, they determined on taking advantage of its shelter for the night. Tying their jaded horses to a tree, they lay down beside them. Tired out with the day's fatigue, they fell soundly asleep; nor did they awaken until rudely stirred from their slumber in the morning by a large body of French infantry who had taken possession of the wood. Resistance being out of the question, they instantly surrendered; but nothing could save them from the abuse and insult of the soldiers, by whom they were plundered of everything valuable. Fortunately, not above two hours afterwards, the advance corps of the French were beaten back by a number of Austrian troops, who in turn took the captors captive, and Ewart and his comrades

were restored to their regiment, not, however, without having obtained permission of the Austrian officer in charge of the prisoners to take from the Frenchmen the property of which they had been plundered, and which they did with something of *interest*, by way of repaying the usage they had experienced.

In the retreat of the British through Holland after the disastrous battle of Nimguen, though conducted by Sir Ralph Abercrombie with great skill and success, considering the desperate circumstances in which they were placed, the army suffered the utmost privations. The winter was unprecedently severe, and the loss of the stores and baggage added greatly to their sufferings. Hundreds perished from excessive cold, hunger, and fatigue. Many affecting anecdotes are told of the vicissitudes endured. While on the march one day, near a place, the name of which we forget, the faint wailings of a child were heard not far from the roadside. Ewart dismounted, and proceeding to the spot, found a woman and child lying amongst the snow. The mother was dead, but the infant, still in life, was in the act of sucking the breast of its lifeless parent. "Albeit unused to the melting mood," Ewart felt overcome by the spectacle. There was no time, however, for sentimentalism; but lifting the child in his arms, and wrapping his cloak around it, he remounted with his tender charge. On reaching the encampment for the evening, he applied to the colonel, who generously offered to defray the expenses of a nurse; but so entirely were the women of the army absorbed with their own misfortunes, that not one of them could be found to take care of the little orphan. Ewart was at length fortunate in discovering the father of the child, a sergeant of the 60th regiment, who was so much affected that he could scarcely be restrained from retracing his steps in the vain hope of finding his partner still in life. Three years after the return of the

army to Britain, and while the Greys were stationed in the south of England, Ewart was one evening called to the head inn of the town. The soldier to whom he was introduced grasped him warmly by the hand, as he inquired whether he knew him. Ewart replied in the negative. A short explanation sufficed. The stranger was the father of the child whom he had saved, come to tender his thanks in a more substantial manner than was in his power on the retreat in Holland. He had since that period been raised to the rank of sergeant-major, and the little orphan was then a thriving boy at home with his grandmother. He insisted on presenting Ewart with a sum of money, but the offer was firmly rejected. He pressed him, however, to accept a silver watch as a memento of his gratitude.

With the exception of a small portion of the regiment which took part in the Peninsular War, the Scots Greys were not again called abroad till 1815. During the intervening period, no opportunity of distinguishing themselves occurred. Ewart, who had borne himself with uniform propriety, and gained the esteem of his superior officers by his soldierly conduct, was early advanced as a sergeant, while his skill in the sword exercise procured him further emolument by being appointed master-of-fence to the regiment. The unlooked-for escape of Napoleon from Elba gave a new impulse to the military ardour of this country. The Greys, as well as the household troops, were called to arms, and in the short but important campaign in Belgium, covered themselves with glory on the plains of Waterloo. The splendid charge of General Ponsonby's cavalry brigade—composed of the First Royals, Greys, and Inniskillings—is matter of history. It was in one of those dashing affairs on the 18th, when covering the Highland brigade against a dense mass of Invincibles, that the two eagles were captured by the Greys and

Royals. As the cavalry passed through the open columns of the Highlanders, the cry of "Scotland for ever!" created an enthusiasm which nothing could withstand, and the French infantry were scattered before them. Upwards of two thousand prisoners were taken in this single onset. Sergeant Ewart was engaged hand to hand with an officer, whom he was about to cut down, when a young ensign of the Greys interceded in his behalf, and desired that he might be passed to the rear. He had scarcely complied with the request, when, on hearing the report of a pistol, he turned and beheld the ensign falling from his saddle, and the French officer in the act of replacing the weapon with which he had savagely taken the life of his preserver. Enraged at the ingratitude of the Frenchman, Ewart immediately turned upon him, and, deaf to his supplications, cut him down to the briskeet. This was the work only of a moment, for the conflict still raged, the French infantry having been supported by a numerous array of cuirassiers and lancers. Dashing forward, he now came within reach of the standard-bearer of one of the Invincible regiments to which they were opposed. A short conflict ensued, when the French officer fell beneath Ewart's sword, and the staff of the eagle stuck fast in the ground, which was soft, so that he was enabled to lay hold of it without further trouble. Had the standard fallen, he could not have recovered it in the *mélée*. Wheeling round, Ewart was in the act of making off with his prize, when a lancer, singling him out, galloped forward and hurled his spear at his breast. With all his reputed quickness in defence, he had just strength enough to ward off the blow, so that the lance merely grazed his side; then raising himself in his stirrups, he brought his antagonist to the ground with one cut of his sword. In riding away with the valuable trophy, Ewart experienced another narrow escape—a wounded

Frenchman, whom he had supposed to be dead, having raised himself on his elbow, and fired at him as he passed. The ball fortunately missed him, and he escaped to the rear, when he was ordered to proceed with the standard to Brussels.

The prowess of Ewart was greatly applauded, not less in Belgium and France than in Britain, and he subsequently, through the influence of the late Sir John Sinclair, obtained a commission in a veteran battalion as a reward for his services. When in Edinburgh in 1816, he was invited to a Waterloo dinner at Leith, where Sir Walter Scott proposed his health in an eloquent and highly complimentary speech. Little accus-

ted to civilian society, Lieutenant Ewart felt diffident to reply ; and, in a note to the chairman, begged that he might be excused, adding, with the bluntness of a soldier, that "he would rather fight the battle of Waterloo over again, than face so large an assemblage." The company, however, would not be denied the gratification of a full-length view of his person, and he was under the necessity of shaking off his diffidence by acknowledging the toast in a brief reply, which he made amidst the rapturous cheers of his entertainers. He was also publicly entertained at dinner in Ayr and Kilmarnock, and was presented with the freedom of Irvine.

CATCHING A TARTAR.

BY D. M. MOIR.

FROM the first moment I clapped eye on the caricature thing of a coat that Tammie Bodkin had, in my absence, shaped out for Cursecowl the butcher, I foresaw, in my own mind, that a catastrophe was brewing for us ; and never did soldier gird himself to fight the French, or sailor prepare for a sea-storm, with greater alacrity, than I did to cope with the bull-dog anger, and buffet back the uproarious vengeance of our heathenish customer.

At first I thought of letting the thing take its natural course, and of threaping down Cursecowl's throat that he must have been feloniously keeping in his breath when Tammie took his measure ; and, moreover, that as it was the fashion to be straight-laced, Tammie had done his utmost trying to make him look like his betters ; till, my conscience checking me for such a nefarious intention, I endeavoured, as became me in the relations of man, merchant, and Christian, to solder the matter peaceably, and show him, if there was a fault committed, that there was no evil intention on my

side of the house. To this end I despatched the bit servant wench, on the Friday afternoon, to deliver the coat, which was neatly tied up in brown paper, and directed, "Mr Cursecowl, with care," and to buy a sheep's-head ; bidding her, by way of being civil, give my kind compliments, and inquire how Mr and Mrs Cursecowl, and the five little Miss Cursecowls, were keeping their healths, and trusting to his honour in sending me a good article. But have a moment's patience.

Being busy at the time turning a pair of kuttikins for old Mr Mooleypouch the mealmonger, when the lassie came back I had no mind of asking a sight of the sheep's-head, as I aye like the little blackfaced in preference to the white, fat, fozy Cheviot breed ; but most providentially I catched a gliskie of the wench passing the shop window, on the road over to Jamie Coom the smith's, to get it singed, having been dispatched there by her mistress. Running round the counter like lightning, I opened the sneck, and halooed to her to wheel to

the right about, having, somehow or other, a superstitious longing to look at the article. As I was saying, there was a providence in this, which, at the time, mortal man could never have thought of.

James Batter had popped in with a newspaper in his hand, to read me a curious account of a mermaid that was seen singing a Gaelic song, and combing its hair with a tortoise-shell comb, someway terrible far north about Shetland, by a respectable minister of the district, riding home in the gloaming after a Presbytery dinner. So, as he was just taking off his spectacles cannily, and saying to me—"And was not that droll?"—the lassie spread down her towel on the counter, when, lo, and behold! such an abominable spectacle! James Batter observing me run back, and turn white, put on his glasses again, cannily taking them out of his well-worn shagreen case, and, giving a stare down at the towel, almost touched the beast's nose with his own.

"And what, in the name of goodness, is the matter?" quo' James Batter; "ye seem in a wonderful quandary."

"The matter!" answered I, in astonishment, looking to see if the man had lost his sight or his senses; "the matter! who ever saw a sheep's-head with straight horns, and a visnomy all colours of the rainbow—red, blue, orange, green, yellow, white, and black?"

"Deed it is," said James, after a nearer inspection; "it must be a lawsynaturay. I'm sure I have read most of Buffon's books, and I have never heard tell of the like. It's gey and queerish."

"Od, James," answered I, "ye take everything very canny; you're a philosopher, to be sure; but I daresay if the moon was to fall from the lift, and knock down the old kirk, ye would say no more than 'it's gey and queerish.'"

"Queerish, man! Do ye not see that?" added I, shoving down his head mostly on the top of it. "Do ye not see that? awful, most awful! exتونish-

ing!! Do ye not see that long beard? Who, in the name of goodness, ever was an eyewitness to a sheep's-head, in a Christian land, with a beard like an unshaven Jew, crying 'owl clowes,' with a green bag over his left shoulder?"

"Dog on it," said James, giving a fidge with his hainches; "dog on it, as I am a living sinner, that is the head of a Willie-goat."

"Willie or Nannie," answered I, "it's not meat for me; and never shall an ounce of it cross the craig of my family—that is as sure as ever James Batter drove a shuttle. Give counsel in need, James: what is to be done?"

"That needs consideration," quo' James, giving a bit hoast. "Unless he makes ample apology, and explains the mistake in a feasible way, it is my humble opinion that he ought to be summoned before his betters. That is the legal way to make him smart for his sins."

At last a thought struck me, and I saw farther through my difficulties than ever mortal man did through a millstone; but, like a politic man, I minted not the matter to James. Keeping my tongue cannily within my teeth, I then laid the head, wrapped up in the bit towel, in a corner behind the counter; and turning my face round again to James, I put my hands into my breeches-pockets, as if nothing in the world had happened, and ventured back to the story of the mermaid. I asked him how she looked—what kind of dress she wore—if she swam with her corsets—what was the colour of her hair—where she would buy the tortoise-shell comb—and so on; when just as he was clearing his pipe to reply, who should burst open the shop-door like a clap of thunder, with burning cat's een, and a face as red as a soldier's jacket, but Curseowl himself, with the new killing-coat in his hand, which, giving a tremendous curse (the words of which are not essentially necessary for me to repeat, being an elder of our kirk), he made

play flee at me with such a birr, that it twisted round my neck, and mostly blinding me, made me doze like a tottum. At the same time, to clear his way, and the better to enable him to take a good mark, he gave James Batter a shove, that made him stoiter against the wall, and snacked the good new farthing tobacco-pipe, that James was taking his first whiff out of; crying at the same blessed moment—

“ Hold out o’ my road, ye long, withered wabster. Ye’re a pair of havering idiots; but I’ll have penny-worths out of both your skins, as I’m a sinner ! ”

What was to be done? There was no time for speaking; for Cursecowl, foaming like a mad dog with passion, seized hold of the ell-wand, which he flourished round his head like a Highlander’s broadsword, and stamping about with his stockings drawn up his thighs, threatened every moment to commit bloody murder.

If James Batter never saw service before, he learned a little of it that day, being in a pickle of bodily terror not to be imagined by living man; but his presence of mind did not forsake him, and he cowered for safety and succour into a far corner, holding out a web of buckram before him, me crying all the time—“Send for the town-officer! Will ye not send for the town-officer?”

You may talk of your General Moores and your Lord Wellingtons as ye like; but never, since I was born, did I ever see or hear tell of anything braver than the way Tammy Bodkin behaved, in saving both our precious lives, at that blessed nick of time, from touch-and-go jeopardy; for, when Cursecowl was rampauging about, cursing and swearing like a Russian bear, hurling out volleys of oaths that would have frightened John Knox, forbye the like of us, Tammie stole in behind him like a wild cat, followed by Joseph Breekey, Walter Cuff, and Jack Thorl, the three

apprentices, on their stocking-soles; and having strong and dumpy arms, pinned back his elbows like a flash of lightning, giving the other callants time to jump on his back, and hold him like a vice; while, having got time to draw my breath, and screw up my pluck, I ran forward like a lion, and houghed the whole concern—Tammie Bodkin, the three faithful apprentices, Cursecowl, and all, coming to the ground like a battered castle.

It was now James Batter’s time to come up in line; and though a douce man (being savage for the insulting way that Cursecowl had dared to use him), he dropped down like mad, with his knees on Cursecowl’s breast, who was yelling, roaring, and grinding his buck-teeth like a mad bull, kicking right and spurring left with fire and fury; and, taking his Kilmarnock off his head, thrust it, like a battering-ram, into Cursecowl’s mouth, to hinder him from alarming the neighbourhood, and bringing the whole world about our ears.

Such a stramash of tumbling, roaring, tearing, swearing, kicking, pushing, cuffing, rugging, and riving about the floor!! I thought they would not have left one another with a shirt on: it seemed a combat even to the death. Cursecowl’s breath was choked up within him, like wind in an empty bladder; and when I got a gliskie of his face, from beneath James’s cowl, it was growing as black as the crown of my hat. It feared me much that murder would be the upshot, the webs being all heeled over, both of broad cloth, buckram, cassimir, and Welsh flannel; and the paper shapings and worsted runds coiled about their throats and bodies like fiery serpents. At long and last, I thought it became me, being the head of the house, to sound a parley, and bid them give the savage a mouthful of fresh air, to see if he had anything to say in his defence.

Cursecowl, by this time, had forcible

assurance of our ability to overpower him, and finding he had by far the worst of it, was obliged to grow tamer, using the first breath he got to cry out—

“A barley, ye thieves! a barley! I tell you, give me wind. There’s not a man in nine of ye!”

Finding our own strength, we saw, by this time, that we were masters of the field; nevertheless we took care to make good terms when they were in our power, nor would we allow Cursecowl to sit upright till after he had said, three times over, on his honour as a gentleman, that he would behave as became one.

After giving his breeches-knees a skuff with his loaf, to dad off the stoure, he came, right foot foremost, to the counter-side, while the laddies were dighting their brows, and stowing away the webs upon their ends round about, saying,—

“Maister Wauch, how have ye the conscience to send hame such a piece o’ wark as that coat to ony decent man? Do ye dare to imagine that I am a Jerusalem spider, that I could be crammed, neck and heels, into such a thing as that? Fie, shame—it would not button on yourself, man, scarecrow-looking mortal though ye be!”

James Batter’s blood was now up, and boiling like an old Roman’s; so he was determined to show Cursecowl that I had a friend in court, able and willing to keep him at stave’s end.

“Keep a calm sough,” said James Batter, interfering; “and not miscall the head of the house in his own shop; or, to say nothing of present consequences, by way of showing ye the road to the door, perhaps Maister Sneck-drawer, the penny-writer, ’ll give ye a caption-paper with a broad margin, to claw your elbow with at your leisure, my good fellow.”

“Pugh, pugh!” cried Cursecowl, snapping his finger and thumb at James’s beak; “I do not value your threatening an ill halfpenny. Come away out your

ways to the crown of the causey, and I’ll box any three of ye, over the bannys, for half-a-mutchkin. But, ‘odsake, Batter, my man, nobody’s speaking to you,” added Cursecowl, giving a hack now and then, and a bit spit down on the floor; “go hame, man, and get your cowl washed; I daresay you have pushioned me, so I have no more to say to the like of you. But now, Maister Wauch, just speaking hooly and fairly, do you not think black burning shame of yourself, for putting such an article into any decent Christian man’s hand, like mine?”

“Wait a wee—wait a wee, friend, and I’ll give ye a lock salt to your broth,” answered I, in a calm and cool way; for, being a confidential elder of Maister Wiggie’s, I kept myself free from the sin of getting into a passion, or fighting, except in self-defence, which is forbidden neither by law nor gospel; and, stooping down, I took up the towel from the corner, and, spreading it upon the counter, bade him look, and see if he knew an auld acquaintance!

Cursecowl, to be such a dragoon, had some rational points in his character; so, seeing that he lent ear to me with a smirk on his rough red face, I went on:

“Take my advice as a friend, and make the best of your way home, killing-coat and all; for the most perfect will sometimes fall into an innocent mistake, and, at any rate, it cannot be helped now. But if ye show any symptom of ob-stripulosity, I’ll find myself under the necessity of publishing you abroad to the world for what you are, and show about that head in the towel for a wonder to broad Scotland, in a manner that will make customers flee from your booth, as if it was infected with the seven plagues of Egypt.”

At sight of the goat’s head, Cursecowl clapped his hand on his thigh two or three times, and could scarcely muster good manners enough to keep himself from bursting out a-laughing.

"Ye seem to have found a fiddle, friend," said I ; "but give me leave to tell you, that ye'll may be find it liker a hanging-match than a musical matter. Are you not aware that I could hand you over to the sheriff, on two special indictments? In the first place, for an action of assault and batterification, in cuffing me, an elder of our kirk, with a sticked killing-coat, in my own shop; and, in the second place, as a swindler, imposing on his Majesty's loyal subjects, taking the coin of the realm on false pretences, and palming off goat's flesh upon Christians, as if they were perfect Pagans."

Heathen though Cursecowl was, this oration alarmed him in a jiffie, soon showing him, in a couple of hurries, that it was necessary for him to be our humble servant; so he said, still keeping the smirk on his face—

"Keh, keh, it's not worth making a noise about after all. Gie me the jacket, Mansie, my man, and it'll maybe serve my nephew, young Killim, who is as lingit in the waist as a wasp. Let us take a shake of your paw over the counter, and be friends. Bye-ganes should be bye-ganes."

Never let it be said that Mansie Wauch, though one of the king's volunteers, ever thrust aside the olive branch of peace; so ill-used though I had been, to say nothing of James Batter, who had got his pipesmashed to crunches, and one of the eyes of his spectacles knocked out, I gave him my fist frankly.

James Batter's birse had been so fiercely put up, and no wonder, that it was not so easily sleeked down; so, for a while, he looked unco glum, till Cursecowl insisted that our meeting should not be a dry one; nor would he hear a single word on me and James Batter not accepting his treat of a mutchkin of Kilbagie.

I did not think James would have been so dour and refractory, funkings and flinging like old Jeroboam; but at last, with the persuasion of the treat, he

came to, and, sleeking down his front hair, we all three took a step down to the far end of the close, at the back street, where Widow Thomson kept the sign of 'The Tankard and the Tappit Hen;' Cursecowl, when we got ourselves seated, ordering in the spirits with a loud rap on the table with his knuckles, and a whistle on the landlady through his foreteeth, that made the roof ring. A bottle of beer was also brought; so, after drinking one another's healths round, with a tasting out of the dram glass, Cursecowl swashed the rest of the raw creature into the tankard, saying—

"Now take your will o't; there's drink fit for a king; that's real 'Pap-in.'"

He was an awful body, Cursecowl, and had a power of queer stories, which weel-a-wat, did not lose in the telling. James Batter, beginning to brighten up, hodged and leuch like a nine-year-old; and I freely confess, for another, that I was so diverted, that, I daresay, had it not been for his fearsome oaths, which made our very hair stand on end, and were enough to open the stone-wall, we would have both sate from that time to this.

We got the whole story of the Willie-goat, out and out, it seeming to be with Cursecowl a prime matter of diversion, especially that part of it relating to the head, by which he had won a crown-piece from Deacon Paunch, who wagered that the wife and me would eat it, without ever finding out our mistake. But, aha, lad!

The long and the short of the matter was this. The Willie-goat had, for eighteen years, belonged to a dragoon marching regiment, and, in its better days, had seen a power of service abroad; till, being now old and infirm, it had fallen off one of the baggage-carts, and got its leg broken on the road to Piershill, where it was sold to Cursecowl, by a corporal, for half-a-crown and a dram. The four quarters he had managed to sell for mutton, like lightning, this one buying a jigget, that

one a back ribs, and so on. However, he had to weather a gey brisk gale in making his point good. One woman remarked that it had an unearthly, rank smell ; to which he said, " No, no—ye do not ken your blessings, friend ; that's the smell of venison, for the beast was brought up along with the deers in the Duke's parks." And to another wife, that, after smell-smelling at it, thought it was a wee humped, he replied, " Faith, that's all the thanks folks get for letting their sheep crop heather among the Cheviot hills," and such-like lies. But as for the head, that had been the doure business. Six times had it been sold and away, and six times had it been brought back again. One bairn said that her "mother didna like a sheep's-head with horns like these," and wanted it changed for another one. A second one said, that " it had tup's een, and her father liked wether mutton." A third customer found mortal fault with the colours, which, she said, " were not canny, or in the course of nature." What the fourth one said, and the fifth one took leave to observe, I have stupidly forgotten, though, I am sure, I heard both ; but I mind one remarked, quite off-hand, as she sought back her money, that " unless sheep could do without beards, like their neighbours, she would keep the pot boiling with a piece beef, in the meantime." After all this—would any mortal man believe it ?—Deacon Paunch, the greasy Daniel Lambert that he is, had taken the wager, as I before took opportunity to remark, that our family would swallow the bait ! But, aha, he was off his eggs there !

James and me were so tickled with

Cursecowl's wild, outrageous, off-hand, humoursome way of telling his crack, that, though sore with neighering, none of the two of us ever thought of rising ; Cursecowl chapping in first one stoup, and then another, and birling the tankard round the table, as if we had been drinking dub-water. I daresay I would never have got away, had I not slipped out behind Lucky Thomson's back—for she was a broad fat body, with a round-eared mutch, and a full-plaited check apron—when she was drawing the sixth bottle of small beer, with her corkscrew between her knees ; Cursecowl lecturing away, at the divilual moment, like a Glasgow professor, to James Batter, whose een were gathering straws, on a pliskie he had once, in the course of trade, played on a conceited body of a French sick-nurse, by selling her a lump of fat pork to make beef-tea of to her mistress, who was dwining in the blue Beelzebubs.

Ohone, and woe's me, for old Father Adam and the fall of man ! Poor, sober, good, honest James Batter was not, by a thousand miles, a match for such company. Everything, however, has its moral, and the truth will out. When Nanse and me were sitting at our breakfast next morning, we heard from Benjie, who had been early up fishing for eels at the water-side, that the whole town talk was concerning the misfortunate James Batter, who had been carried home, totally incapable, far in the night, by Cursecowl and an Irish labourer—that slepted in Widow Thomson's garret—on a hand-barrow, borrowed from Maister Wiggie's servant-lass, Jenny Jessamine.—*Mansie Wauch.*

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